

WHERE ARE THE DEAD ?



CASELL AND COMPANY, LTD
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CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION AND LETTER FROM "A. J. C" .	VII
SIR ARTHUR KEITH: WHERE ARE THE DEAD? .	I
SIR OLIVER LODGE: THE DISCOVERY OF THE ¹ SPIRITUAL WORLD	8
ARNOLD BENNETT: WHERE ARE THE DEAD? .	15
THE RIGHT REV. E. A. KNOX: THE UNSPEAKABLE GLORY OF ETERNITY	20
G. K. CHESTERTON: THE ROUT OF REASON . .	24
PROF JULIAN HUXLEY: MY IDEA OF SURVIVAL .	30
DR. HENRY TOWNSEND. THE MEANING OF HEAVEN	38
REV. H. R. L. SHEPPARD. IN THE HANDS OF LOVE	44
HILAIRE BELLOC: IMMORTALITY	48
HUGH WALPOLE: THE LITTLE MINDS OF MEN .	57
REV. R. J. CAMPBELL: THE DEAD ARE ALIVE .	63
PROF. H. J. SPOONER: MY EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL	70
REV. J. P. ARENDZEN: IMMORTALITY—OR NATURE , IS MAD.	77
SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: THE ANSWER OF THE SPIRITUALISTS	83
GEORGE A BIRMINGHAM (REV. CANON HANNAY): RIVERS OF SOULS AND THE ETERNAL SEA .	88

CONTENTS

	PAGE
J A SPENDER THE ETERNAL VISION	94
REV T. RHONDDA WILLIAMS THE SOUL DEMANDS ETERNITY	101
LADY SOUTHWARK THE PARTING WILL NOT BE LONG	108
ROBERT BLATCHFORD THE SECRETS OF LIFE AND LOVE	113
T R GLOVER THE LESSON OF LIFE.	118
ROBERT LYND WHEN IMAGINATION IS CERTAIN .	124
REV E S WATERHOUSE WHAT IS ETERNAL IF NOT THE SOUL ?	131

INTRODUCTION

THERE IS NO question of greater import to every human being—no question so profound or more difficult to answer And yet of all the problems which Life offers it is the one we would wish to solve

A correspondent, "A J C," wrote a letter to the *Daily News* which is published below As the result of it, some of the greatest thinkers of to-day were asked to give their views as to the destination of the countless dead Whither do they go? Where is this army of countless billions now?

The articles in this volume are often divergent in opinion, but are thoughtful and enthralling in their interest Frequently they suggest possibilities as to our mission after death which will be new even to many who have pondered the subject deeply The writer of each article, it may be said, is responsible only for the views expressed in his particular contribution

The letter which originated the book is as follows

SIR—Will you permit me as an ordinary man in the street to say my say in your columns on the subject of survival after death and to make an appeal for honest guidance I can assure you that Sir Arthur Keith's blunt statement that the death of the body is the death of the individual spirit has spread dismay among those who are comfortable believers in personal immortality and provoked painful controversies in town and village to a degree not in the least adequately reflected in the columns of the daily Press

INTRODUCTION

As I was coming up to town yesterday by the 10.45 express from Taunton I listened to a conversation between two well-nourished men of business, one of whom had been reading a short newspaper letter in which a woman protested with pitiful impotence against what she evidently regarded as Sir Arthur Keith's blasphemous utterance. These two men took a different line. They thought it was stupid and unnecessary that any scientist should seek to destroy the simple faith of religious-minded persons by dogmatic statements that could not be proved. Then one of them, in a sudden access of candour, said to the other: "For my part I have always had an instinct that in one form or another I shall survive the grave; but what I have never been able to understand is where we all go after death, if indeed we go anywhere."

It was more or less a casual reflection, which yet seemed to me to possess a much deeper practical significance than the Christian philosophy admits. Where *are* the mighty hosts of the dead? Is it a foolish question? To me, as a humble, but life-long member of a Christian community, it appears to be one of supreme importance, if also of supreme difficulty. The population of the earth to-day is round about 1,800,000,000. According to a rough calculation the average annual death rate is about 17 per 1,000 per annum; probably that is an underestimate. But it means that at least 30,000,000 persons die every year. Man has walked the earth, if the biologists and anthropologists are to be believed, for at least half a million years.

Accept literally the purely Biblical descent of man, and allow for the rapid increase of population in recent historical periods, and then picture if you can the army of countless billions that even now, with the vital pulse of the world in which mortals dwell as strong as ever, have passed over to the other side. Every time a human being dies he drops into that abyss of numbers—almost too deep for thought. What happens to the poor, bewildered soul? Where is the place of the little child in that universe of the dead? Where and in what manner is the eternal army assembled and disposed?

Can we indeed dismiss such questions as a trivial irrelevance or be content to mumble vague words about the unknown dimension? The modern spiritualist, greatly daring, claims at a word to call from the abyss the one voice that he longs to hear—friendly, matter-of-fact, soothing and unafraid. And the chemist and biologist laugh in their sleeves at his "magic." The Christian minister discourses with reverence but obscurely on the never-ending joys of the celestial host, of the glorious mansions it inhabits. But he never explains. He never goes into details. He never advances an intelligent or constructive theory. He may give

INTRODUCTION

the comfort of hope of blind faith but never the consolation of conviction and understanding faith to a bereaved lover a sorrowing parent He shirks the issue

I am not impressed at all by Sir Arthur Keith's limited physical view of the spirit of man But like many others I am sharply impressed by the fact that Christian ministers habitually shirk the issue of the scope and nature of life after death Is there no means sir by which the leaders of religious thought in this country many of whom I respect and admire can be induced to meet the issue boldly to face up to the problems that consciously or unconsciously tease and sadden the hearts of millions of Christians and to explain in rational terms that faith that is in them?

If they continue to evade the responsibility—if Bishop Barnes for instance discovers more profit in his chemical analysis of the consecrated elements or Mr R J Campbell professes still to contemplate his own nebulous doctrine of the immanence of God in all things—are there not leaders of philosophic thought outside the churches men of intellect and of profound spiritual experience men of science quite as distinguished and impressive as Sir Arthur Keith who would be willing to take up the challenge? Perhaps after all an appeal from the priest to Einstein would not be to imagine entirely a vain thing

Every man seeks within himself to create his own image of God his own conception of the life of the world to come Is it strange that so many ordinary decent people should come to a negative or a desperate conclusion when the religious professors leave them to pursue virtually undisturbed their crude and imperfect visions of a possible hereafter?

I am just one of those sir who have been left well or ill alone

Yours, etc

A. J. C.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD ?

BY

SIR ARTHUR KEITH, M.D., F.R.S.

FOR me life is a web and is immortal. Your correspondents and I are infinitesimal specks in that colossal web, as are also the 1,800,000,000 other human beings who keep us company on this earth. The web of humanity, now on the loom of time, is but the end of the immeasurable sheet which recedes into the abysm of the Past and the beginning of another to which we can see no end. It is true that men who have studied the Sun assure us that a time will come when our planet will be unfit for life, but as that calamity lies millions of centuries ahead we may reasonably call the period assured as an immortal lease.

It is in this material sense that the biologist regards man as an immortal being ; we survive, if we survive at all, only in the lives of our descendants. Every man and woman is born with the seeds of immortality within his or her body.

I am but a non-commissioned officer in that large and progressing army which the world has enlisted for the study and conquest of disease. We cannot hope to succeed in our campaign except by the study of life—the processes of life which we find at work within the body and brain of man. While we must give due attention to the evidence

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

of men who have inquired into the constitution of matter we must give especial consideration to those who have studied the organization of living matter. No court which inquires into the nature of man can be regarded as properly constituted which rejects the evidence of those best fitted to give it—medical men.

Before we discuss what life is and the possibilities of its survival, let us see what medical men know concerning death. When a physician finds that his patient's heart has ceased to beat and his breath to ebb and flow he concludes that death has taken place. For all practical purposes the patient is dead, but it is not really so. Could the physician instantly set up an apparatus by which he could circulate fresh blood, containing oxygen, through the vessels of the dead man's head, consciousness would return; memory and thought would revive; mind would be restored, words uttered, so long as the artificial circulation was continued.

But let the circulation and the supply of oxygen cease for ten minutes and the living units of the brain, in their serried millions, pass into a state of irretrievable death. The heart itself survives much longer. After a certificate of death has been properly signed the heart may be cut from a "dead" body and by artificial means revived so that it will again beat and continue beating for some time if proper precautions are taken. Forty hours after a man is legally dead the coats of his arteries may still manifest signs of life. The human body is made up of an infinite number of microscopic living units; medical men have removed some of these from a dead child and kept them alive and growing in their laboratories when the rest of the body was crumbling to dust.

Death is not an affair of an instant. The human body

dies by a process of attenuation as does the starved population of a beleaguered city: the delicate die first; the most enduring last. If death is due, as is supposed by Sir Oliver Lodge, to the escape of an immaterial spirit, we should expect the exodus to be instantaneous, whereas we find it to be a process of piecemeal. And if the living essence of man's body is an immaterial spirit, how comes it that it requires such material things as air, food and water for its maintenance? If a ghost enters my house by night and I find in the morning it has eaten my food, drunk my wine, and stolen my money, I conclude that it was material and not immaterial.

This is exactly what we biologists conclude concerning the living spirit of the human body; for its existence it must consume and transform energy. Consciousness, feeling, memory, will—all that we count mind—disappear from the living brain the moment we withhold its supply of oxygen and of energy. Life as we know it has always a material basis; a physiologist cannot imagine how life could be possible apart from matter. If our minds are to survive, our bodies must bear them company.

The dead body is an extinguished candle; what do we know of the burning candle—the body glowing with health and life? We know how the candle of a human life is lit; only the flame from another candle will start it into being. How quickly our knowledge has progressed! Only a century has elapsed since the eye of man saw for the first time the speck of protoplasm—the ovum in which every human life takes its beginning. And now we know every stage in that wonderful miracle which transforms a particle of living matter—smaller than the head of the finest pin—into a grown man or woman.

We have followed in the womb every change which carries

the human body up the scale of life from the simplest beginnings to the most elaborate endings. We begin as a microscopic unit of protoplasm and we end as a multi-millioned colony of living cells. We see great battalions of these cells marshalled to carry on the work of the nervous system; we see cousin battalions arranged to form muscular engines, others are specialized to serve the lowly purpose of living bone levers. We see the elaboration of these delicate living instruments—the eye and the ear. Even in the life of the body there is death; certain units are ever in process of birth, others in process of death. Every day the human body lives and dies; every hour it is giving off the spirit or energy of life in the form of good actions and bad ones. If philosophers are right, nothing is lost.

How are we to explain the elaborate and miraculous changes which transform a simple unit of living matter into an adult human body? Is it true, as men like Sir Oliver Lodge believe, that an ethereal entity, a human spirit, has entered into this speck of protoplasm, seized its atoms and caused them to pass through the elaborate turmoils of development simply to secure an uncertain and at the best temporary terrestrial lodging? No sooner has a spirit fashioned its home than decay sets in and sooner or later loses all its labour. Nay it is easier, and more satisfying to our reason, to explain the known facts of life as material processes than to attribute them to the workings of a mysterious and immaterial entity such as is postulated by Sir Oliver Lodge and many of your correspondents.

Why should human beings begin as products of the womb? If my opponents are right in supposing that the living human body is merely the husk of an immaterial

spirit then no explanation is possible. But if we accept evolution as a truth, which we have the best grounds for doing, then we can explain why man begins as a simple cell and why his developing body ascends the scale of living things. For evolution traces man's history back to the dawn of life on earth; his embryological record points clearly to such a remote and lowly beginning. Biologists therefore regard humanity as part of the web of life whose unknown beginnings lie in the recesses of time. Man is but part of that variegated web; what we postulate of him must also apply to the whole web.

I agree with Julian Huxley in this, that if we postulate an immaterial essence to account for the life of man we cannot withhold the same interpretation from the living amœba. If we grant immortality to the spirit of man's body how can we deny it to that of every living thing? We must not shirk the implications of either Immortality or of Evolution. Everyone of us must face these problems with the utmost honesty and courage of which we are capable.

I have spoken of "life as a web on the loom of time." Who, then, is in charge of the loom? Who is the weaver? As far as biologists can perceive the loom works automatically; the threads spin themselves. The human threads in that web differ from all the other strands within it in one important respect; man alone can alter the spinning and the pattern; according as he spins and designs is the web of the future. The web spun by plants and animals is quick with life, but is not the whole universe really alive? Astronomers tell us that some stars represent worlds coming into being, others passing towards extinction; the processes of growth and decay within the universe of matter are regulated automatically. So are the movements of all the heavenly bodies. Their regulation is

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

both elaborate and automatic; Newton made his name immortal by giving his fellow men a reasonable explanation of why masses of matter are compelled to behave in a certain way when swung in space.

Now, we who are peering into the behaviour of living matter find just the same automatic laws at work as physicists find to reign in the universe of dead matter; the laws which prevail in living bodies are infinitely complex but are not beyond the human powers of discovery.

Biologists do not know as yet when or how life began; they have no explanation to offer of its inner significance and ultimate meaning. Their primary business is to observe happenings and give a truthful record of them. Therein lies the weakness of their case, for the human mind craves for a solution of the great mystery and is restless until it is satisfied as to its place in the great scheme of the universe. And yet the honest biologist cannot accept, as an explanation of what he sees and knows, a dual theory of the living body—be it that of man or of any other animal. For him spirit and body are one and indissoluble.

Neither my opponents nor I will ever persuade an untutored savage that the voice which issues from the box of a gramophone is not that of a spirit. Nor can we blame the savage for interpreting things after his own manner; for him everything that happens is caused by a spirit. The savage believes, just as spiritualists do, that the air around us is swarming with spirits.

The heart of man is naturally lazy and hates the scientific toil entailed by a search into the cause of things; if a man believes in spirits then he may sit at ease and spin dream-like and, to him, quite satisfying explanations. When modern medicine began its beneficent work it found

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

spirits of many kinds were supposed to be at work in and around the human body. Pasteur discovered that the malignant spirits of disease were, for the greater part, material organisms; malignant devils which seized men became known as "Jacksonian epilepsies"; the "vital spirits" of the blood were found to be oxygen. Science has driven, and is driving, spirits from the body more and more. Sooner or later it will expel all of them, for as knowledge improves we find that what were spirits in the eyes of our forefathers are actual substances to our vision.

If the spirit of truth is the kernel of religion, then men of science are truly religious beings. They not only believe in the immortality of man, but they are convinced that this immortality is material. And believing so they work for the betterment of the world and of humanity; this is the most essential part of their daily religion.

But the one thing the man of science insists upon above all others is that his currency be struck in the mint of truth and that each coin must carry on its face the stamp of verifiable truth. Once let the human fancy free to wander at will untrammelled by fact and the markets of the scientific world will be flooded with debased coin. When a scientific man calls upon spirits, mysterious essences, and uncertain shadows to explain phenomena of the living and of the dead world, he is drawing cheques upon imaginary banks.

The true man of science is ever mindful of the dog in the fable, which mistook appearance for reality. As it crossed a stream with the bone of reality in its mouth it happened to see in the water another dog also with a bone in its mouth and jumped to seize the shadow bone.

That I suggest, in all humility, is the kind of mistake which many of your correspondents are now making.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

BY

SIR OLIVER LODGE

THERE IS, or used to be, a system of Philosophy which held that all that we could really know for certain was our own individual existence. We were admittedly aware of our own consciousness, but could be directly aware of no one else's.

Accordingly the existence of other persons was an inference which we had to draw, an inference which was based upon the appearance and activity of certain material organisms which appealed to us easily because they produced an impression on our senses.

It is worth noting and remembering that all that we directly apprehend through our senses is (1) the solid resistance of the external world, and (2) the vibration which reach us from it through the air and through the ether. The first indications we learn to call matter and force, while we interpret the vibratory sensations as sound and light respectively.

From these bare indications we infer a whole world of living creatures, some of them akin to ourselves and therefore assumed to possess an intelligence, sensations, and ideas like our own, though this we can only judge from

their behaviour. An utterly sceptical system of philosophy might seek to question even this interpretation of sense indications; it has been claimed that the external world was perhaps an illusion, and the existence of other people a plausible but possibly misleading assumption. There are no lengths to which full-blown scepticism may not be prepared to go.

Common sense, however, brushes all this aside and deduces from the evidence a great deal more than could rigidly, and so to speak mathematically, be proven. The nature and structure of an atom of matter, for instance, is not a thing that could be demonstrated to the senses; belief in it has grown up gradually among experts, and is spread by them with more or less success among people of ordinary education.

Again, the existence of vibrations in the ether of space, the methods of measuring the rapidity of those vibrations, the way they are originated, and what becomes of them are all matters requiring serious study, but the results, so far as they can be generally understood, are accepted without much hesitation. Once etheric vibrations and waves are accepted, the existence of the Ether of Space in which they occur can hardly be rationally questioned. And yet, because the ether makes no direct impression on our senses, there is a good deal of scepticism about it, and few are aware of its immense and widespread importance. It is, in fact, the one universal thing in the material universe; it is the seat of all energy, and of it the very ingredients of the atoms of matter are composed. That at least is my view.

Let us discriminate, therefore, between the evidence which our senses give us and the deductions which we can legitimately make from them. That which appeals

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

to our senses as corresponding to or representing an individual—whether man, animal, or plant—is really a collocation of material particles, which, because of its behaviour, we say is “animated,” in that it feeds and grows and reproduces in a way quite different from the other forms of matter which we call inorganic or, perhaps, dead. There is something, we know not what, which controls and animates such an organism, and the real existence of this something is inferred from its behaviour, just as other intelligences are inferred from the behaviour of their bodily counterparts.

We cannot explain exactly how mind entered into relation with matter, nor do we know what happens when that relation ceases. It may be that our permanent existence is in a supersensuous region all the time, that we are permanently associated with the impalpable non-sensuous ether of space, and that our present manifestation or incarnation, through the instrumentality of a material organism, is a comparatively trivial, as it is certainly a temporary, episode. That is what some of us have come to think. And that is partly why we realize that there is nothing astonishing about evidence in favour of our surviving this material episode. On the contrary, we find it difficult to imagine anything else. Our association with matter is really the puzzling thing that needs explanation.

Leaving these generalities, the pressing question for humanity, or rather for each human individual, is, What happens when his present association with matter is terminated, and when he no longer has an instrument for manifesting himself to those of his fellows who are still encumbered with the flesh? There is no reason to suppose that a personality goes out of existence merely because it has ceased to act on matter. If it really existed in the

either all the time, it could continue to exist there in as substantial a form as ever, though no longer able to appeal to our sense-organs and therefore out of our ken.

The question whether an individual does so continue to exist, in just as real a sense as ever, is one for examination by evidence; and at first sight it is not obvious how evidence can be given, because evidence, however indirect, can only be given through a material organism. The giving of evidence might have been impossible; we might have had to fall back upon reasoning or faith alone.

But it has turned out that some personalities who have lost their own material organism are able to find and use other organized instruments, and thus have been able to tell us what happened. The power of communication, through what is called mediumship, is rather surprising. The power has doubtless always existed, but it has only had scientific attention directed to it in recent years, and the majority of the race have not grown accustomed to it.

Those who have studied the matter have found that here and there are living persons who are able to vacate part of their material organism for a time—to go into trance sometimes—or at any rate to allow their brain-nerve-muscle system to be actuated by an intelligence other than their own.

The occurrence of telepathy was an incipient indication of this sort of process, but it has greatly developed, and now those who have departed this life are able every now and then to utilize the instrument so provided, and to enter into communication with those they have left behind. Their testimony (whether we accept it or not) is that they find themselves in a world just as real as our world, that they still possess their intelligence, their memory, their character, and their tastes; and that they recognized

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

and were welcomed by those who had gone before. Moreover, they tell us that they regretted the sorrow of those they had left behind, and wished to mitigate it; for they remain very much themselves, they are not really deprived of a bodily instrument, though it is now no longer made of matter, and they are happy in the consciousness of progress, continued affection, and ultimate reunion.

Among other details they assure us that they know to some extent what is going on down here, that they still take an interest in the affairs of the world, especially in the joys and sorrows of their loved ones, and that they are even able to help and influence us, subject to wise restrictions. They tell us something of their occupations and privileges, of their growth in knowledge and progress generally, and they say that occasionally they have been allowed to enter still higher states of being and to become aware of lofty and beneficent intelligences far beyond the standard of present humanity.

They thus appear to catch glimpses of some great Scheme worthy of this magnificent universe, of which we and they are such apparently insignificant portions. They encourage our faith in goodness and unselfishness and mutual service, and in all the essentials of religion. They may lament such sad events as the premature passing over of children; but these are well looked after and cared for; they are enabled to grow up among favourable surroundings; there are good people there, as there are here, whose duty and pleasure it is to look after them; and generally they tell us that the conditions are not so entirely different as we might have imagined.

The fact is that we are so limited and hidebound by our present senses, which are stimulated by nothing apart from matter, that we are liable to attach too much im-

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

portance to it, and to forget or not realize that in all the mysterious depths of space particles of matter are but an occasional episode, comparatively few and far between. Space, which is full of ether and contains boundless stores of energy, is infinitely more important than matter, and there is a growing opinion that what seems to us the emptiness of space is the real seat of life and mind and all the other higher elements of consciousness, which are only with difficulty, and, as it were, by special coercion dis-

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

are speculations not based on the solid ground of scientific exploration. To that I reply that they are the result of long-continued study of fact, that they are not put forward lightly, that they are in fair agreement with the opinion of others who have given time to the study, and that at least they have the value of a working hypothesis which can be tested and confronted with growing experience.

Even now my assured conviction may be a comfort to bereaved people, and I believe that posterity will learn to assimilate these views still more clearly and certainly and that the scientific discovery of a spiritual world—long postulated by religion—is one of the features of this epoch in the history of mankind.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD ?

BY

ARNOLD BENNETT

THIS is a subject upon which people feel so deeply that those who try to deal with it should use the greatest care in order as far as possible not to wound susceptibilities. And they should also remember that no answer to the question can be final. Every answer is merely the vague surmise of a particular individual at a particular moment of his mental growth.

We should begin with the limitations of the human mind. There are things we cannot conceive. First: We cannot conceive the act of creation, the making of something out of nothing. We cannot take an empty space and then imagine how anything can come there that previously did not exist in any form anywhere.

Second: Similarly we cannot conceive the act of annihilation.

Third: We cannot conceive "spirit" without "matter." In other words we cannot conceive "soul" without a material form. We can conceive spirit as something extremely thin, subtle, gaseous—a poet has likened souls to flames going up to heaven—but a material form of some kind the soul must have for us before we can conceive it at all.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

Assume the apparition of a ghost, and we assume the ghost has some materiality. If it had not we could not see it, for the reason that vision is the result of PHYSICAL reactions on the organs of sight.

Now let us suppose that a soul at death permanently leaves the body—of course, in some material form: that, at any rate, is conceivable. And let us face the difficulties of the supposition. The arithmetical difficulty has been well stated by an able correspondent, "A. J. C." Every year over the earth a number of souls equal to the population of France would be liberated and would depart. The number of disembodied souls must therefore be enormous; it must amount to billions, and it is continuously increasing. Correspondingly, the amount of vital force available for the creation of new souls must be continuously decreasing—like the heat of the sun.

The question arises: Where is the vast and ever-increasing assemblage of departed souls? If it is on or near the surface of the earth it must cover the same in a packed layer of some thickness. So far as our power of conception goes it must have some physical qualities and it must be somewhere. Where is it? No answer.

Theorists have talked about the "fourth dimension," ingenious persons who argue that besides the three dimensions of length, breadth and depth (as exemplified by a box), there may be a fourth, and therefore that bodies which exist in four-dimensional space may exist around us, through us, in us, without us being aware of the same.

Of course, there may be four dimensions—there may be forty—and mathematicians have done sums about four dimensions and novelists have written romances about them; but nobody has ever yet explained what the fourth dimension may be, because nobody has ever yet physically

conceived it. Hence we may leave aside the fourth-dimensional explanation of the habitat of disembodied souls as being completely incomprehensible to the human intelligence.

There remains the theory of reincarnation. If dead souls are accommodated with newly created bodies, then by this time the great majority of bodies are occupied by old souls, and again the majority of those old souls must have occupied numerous different bodies in turn. The evidence that this is so does not go beyond an occasional imperfect bodily or spiritual resemblance between a living man and a dead man. Such evidence is acutely inadequate, and may, I think, be ignored. Moreover, the theory would cut across principles of heredity the truth of which is almost universally admitted. Still, it cannot be ruled out as utterly inconceivable.

But the question of the habitat of the dead seems to me to be far less interesting than the question: What are the dead doing? Is each dead soul existing solitary—somewhere? Improbable. If not, then there must be some sort of social organization of the dead, and it would be contrary to all our ideas to suppose that this organization is standing still, is not developing in some process of evolution. If there is no progress among dead souls, what is the Creator's purpose in keeping them at a standstill? No answer.

We are forced therefore to the conclusion that the colossal community of the dead, endowed with physical attributes (without physical attributes we cannot even conceive these citizen-souls), is morally and socially progressing somewhere. Again, and more insistently, where? In the ether, on no physical footing? Almost inconceivable. On our own globe? Impossible. On some

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

other globe? Equally impossible, for we cannot imagine how souls with physical attributes could cross the wastes of the ether. They may be able to do so, but as we cannot imagine how they do so, the theory ceases to interest speculative thinkers, and must be excluded from the region of practical thought.

To my mind (which is, of course, only one mind at a particular stage of its development) all the above theorizing seems fanciful, and is merely the fruit of a strong desire to believe that those whom we have loved and who are departed have not ceased to exist. I much prefer the theory so clearly and so succinctly stated by Sir Arthur Keith, in his address at Manchester University on May 9th, 1928, that matter and spirit are indivisible and that when the body loses its organized vitality what we call the soul loses its organized vitality too, and all is in time resolved into its original atoms.

But atoms are indestructibly alive; they are the most alive things we know; they probably comprise the potentialities of all intelligence and all progress, according to the manner in which they combine and re-combine. Nothing can be destroyed—no quality of mind, no beauty, no kindliness. The elements of that which we have loved will in some new and probably finer form reappear to us or to our descendants. Everything is from everlasting to everlasting.

And in the ordinary sense of the word there are no dead

I well realize that the theory of the inseparableness of body and soul is only a theory, and that it can be attacked by arguments many of which are now unanswerable and some of which will be for ever unanswerable. But every other theory concerning death is and always will be in the same case. I am as convinced as I am of anything th:

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

we shall never know what death signifies and involves. (And we shall never cease to try to know) It is best for us that we should never know. If we knew, the importance of what we call life might diminish to nothing, and the scheme of evolution would be most gravely disorganized. Human ignorance of the future is more than bliss; it is an ordinance of the divine wisdom.

THE UNSPEAKABLE GLORY OF ETERNITY

BY

THE RIGHT REV. E. A. KNOX, D D.

(Formerly Bishop of Manchester and Chairman of the
Council of the National Church League.)

THIS question, seriously asked, demands a serious answer. In view of the absolutely innumerable multitudes who have passed away from earth, and are hourly passing away, the bewildered soul inquires, "Is there any region in the Universe where all these ever increasing multitudes can be received?"

Now there are preliminary reflections which have some bearing on the inquiry, though they do not dispose of it. So far as we can go back in history we constantly meet with a reverent, or even exaggeratedly honourable disposal of the dead. While multitudes of bodies have been disposed of by funeral pyres, by cannibalism, by the waters of the deep and by its denizens, still the number of dead bodies entombed in sepulchres defies all calculation. It would be incredible, if we did not know of it as fact.

Many of these sepulchres have been undisturbed for millenniums. It is suggested as a preliminary reflection that if man has been able in the tiny space of this earth to find room for so great a multitude of dead bodies, when

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

we pass from earth to the infinite regions of space, and remember that spirits have no dimensions, so far as we know, there is no difficulty about their reception arising from the mere fact of their numbers.

Still this answer to the proposed inquiry would be a very superficial answer. We want to go far deeper into the question than any measurement of space will carry us. We want to get down to realities.

To do so we must first dispose of the unrealities forced upon us by the constitution of our minds. Our minds dispose us to accept what our senses report as realities. Again our minds are so constituted that we receive these reports under conditions of time and space. But these conditions have no reality in themselves, nor is the visible world more than an appearance presented by our senses. We are aware that behind the eyes through which we see, the touch through which we handle there is the "I," to whom the reports are made, the "I" who uses the machinery of the body, the "I" who knows itself distinct from the body and all the reports of the senses. That strange invisible but overruling "I" is the one Reality before which all that belongs to time and space passes. For the reception, for the housing of that "I" no space is needed. We cannot think of it in terms of time and space. We believe it to be independent of them all and superior to them all.

The existence of this "I" disposes us to believe in the other great Reality, the "I" of the Universe, that is God. He is to the Universe what "I" am to the world and to my body. So persuaded, we look upon death as a release from the unreal into the world of reality, the confronting of ourselves with God, undisturbed by the conditions of time, and space, and sense, which here intervene between us.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

All that is best in me, Truth, Love, Purity, will be face to face with Absolute Truth, Love, Purity. Only it will not be a meeting of abstract qualities with abstract qualities, but of Personalities with the one Personality above all other Personalities. Moreover, my faith as a Christian teaches me that whereas this meeting of the finite with the Infinite would be of necessity intolerable and unfruitful there, in that awful Presence, I shall find Finite and Infinite united in the Godhead in the Person of Jesus Christ. I shall be there not confronting the Eternal in my own merits, or on the strength of my own capacity, but as I am in Christ Jesus.

In this anticipation there is no vagueness, no shirking of difficulties by use of conventional phrases. Experience is behind this anticipation. I know that even here, in spite of all the hindrance of unrealities there has been communion between God and myself. His Spirit in me has revealed to me the Fatherhood of God in Christ Jesus.

The Love that passes knowledge, the rest that comes from childlike trust, the peace and calm that reign in my soul beneath the ruffled billows of earth's fortunes and misfortunes—these things are not hallucinations, but the loftiest heights of my experience, myself at my very best.

Just because this communion with God is unconditioned by time and space, I have no fear of its being cut off by separation from the body, or removal from this world. I have also the promise resting on the Resurrection that this "I" will not be a vague, impersonal or unreal being, but that whatever of personality attaches to the distinction between body and body will be mine, in respect of a spiritual body.

Into the mysteries so suggested I dare not intrude. They suggest a communion not only of myself with God,

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

but of myself with all who are sharers of this same life in God. I seem to see Eternity not as a selfish beatitude, but as the communion of countless hosts, a world to which all the vast multitude of stellar bodies will be insignificant in number, an ocean in which each several wave is lit up by the eternal Sun, and reflects infinitely its unspeakable glory.

THE ROUT OF REASON

BY

G. K. CHESTERTON

MANY people seem to be wondering what will become of the human soul in another world. I am wondering what has become of the human mind in this world. I am especially wondering what has become of the human power of reason in this age. Hume or Huxley, or any of the rationalists who were really rational, could never have kept a straight face in the presence of the preposterous confusions of thought that are now called arguments by Sir Arthur Keith or the Bishop of Birmingham. It is as if the brain itself had broken down. An inquirer writes to the *Daily News* gravely asking how there can be room in eternity for all the souls enjoying immortality. Apparently he has read the great text about "man's mansions", and supposes they are all limited and numbered like Artillery Mansions or Overstrand Mansions. I do not know how many commodious flats, with kitchen and bathroom, he will permit Omnipotence to erect, before it becomes necessary to announce in the headlines that there is a Housing Problem in Heaven. That is the sort of philosophical doubt which we are apparently called upon to "meet" nowadays. The example is extraordinary enough, but I really think it is every bit a

intelligent as Bishop Barnes on the Sacrament or Sir Arthur Keith on the Soul.

In the case of Sir Arthur Keith I can pardon a traditional atmosphere and an almost sentimental sensibility to quaint old-fashioned metaphors, like that of the candle. It seems strange at first sight that a man of Sir Arthur Keith's ability and deserved distinction should be duped by such a clumsy figure of speech; but I take it he was attracted to it because of its antiquity. Whatever else may be said against Sir Arthur, nobody can accuse him of being unduly modern or offensively up-to-date. He defends the *Darwinian tradition* because it is a tradition; and a great national tradition. But when Mr. Belloc quoted Vialleton against it, Sir Arthur Keith calmly told him that there was no such remark in Vialleton at all. Whereupon it was discovered, to the wonder of the world, that Sir Arthur had (apparently) never even heard of Vialleton's recent and famous book, and had read nothing later than an old text-book. I do not blame him for that; I never take the trouble to read the latest literature myself; but I do not go out of my way to give somebody else the lie about it. The same romantic taste for lingering in the shades of old libraries, which I share with Sir Arthur, has doubtless kept him loyal to the parable of the soul as a little flame. So he is still measuring eternity, as Alfred the Great measured time, by candles. But even a leading scientist might by this time have heard of electricity. If we must have material parables, in an age that has lost the power of abstract thought, the more modern parable would obviously be much the closer of the two. Of course, such analogies are inadequate anyhow, as any thinker could have seen in the time of Anselm, if not of Alfred.

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who denied. What troubles me is that the denial is no longer rational; that any rationalist could see that it is not rational. Nobody needs a medical man to tell him that a dead man is materially as dead as mutton. Nobody need believe a medical man, any more than a muffin-man, or any other kind of man, upon the totally different metaphysical point of whether the abstract principle of energy has ceased or been withdrawn. The whole of that question of religious belief begins where all this leaves off; but it begins on a clear ground of agnosticism. Sir Arthur's ground is not clear and it is not agnostic. There was exactly the same muddle about the position of the Bishop of Birmingham when he uttered his celebrated howler on the subject of the sacramental philosophy. I am not here dealing with it considered as an attack on my religion. I am dealing with it as an attack on everybody's reason; or rather, as an example of the weakening of the reason, so that it cannot even attack. When Bishop Barnes suggested that chemical investigation might test Transubstantiation, it was no occasion for the skies to fall, as at a sublime blasphemy. It was simply that the solid earth of reason and common sense, on which we all walk, gave way under us with a faint crash. It was the human mind that had collapsed.

So far as that goes, it is merely a coincidence that the Bishop's argument was urged against a point of faith, which I myself believe to be a fact. The Bishop's argument would be quite as silly, if it were used against something that really is a fable. It would be so, for instance, if it were an ordinary fairy-tale. Somebody says: "The princess is enchanted under the form of a parrot in a golden cage." The proper answer of the sceptic, according to his degree of prudence, is either "Bosh!" or "There is

Asking for them is like asking, as did the Mad Hatter or the March Hare, for a drawing of a muchness. But there are metaphors and metaphors; and the candle is a very bad metaphor. The flame is not the principle of life in a candle; it is only some of its elements mixed with air and presenting another form to the senses. But suppose there were something in a candle that made it jump out of the candlestick, dance on the table, run round the room and hit a muddle-headed materialist over the head. We might then begin to ask what was the principle of activity in the candle. If the candle then tumbled down and remained inert as before, we might well ask where its principle of activity had gone to.

We should not have the remotest reason, if we were rational, for saying that its principle of activity could not be active anywhere else. On the electric parallel, for instance, the same battery might be making a three-legged stool dance in the next room. But of course the parallel is only a parable. We cannot describe mind in terms of matter; if only for the reason that we cannot even perceive matter except by mind. That was why Huxley, in the days when agnostics could think, said that if he had to choose between denying mind or matter, he would deny matter. Huxley would have said, of course, that he did not know whether the soul survived. If you had told him that "a medical man" could certify that it did not survive (as Sir Arthur suggests) he would have enjoyed a very hearty laugh.

What troubles me is not that a very able anthropologist doubts immortality, or even that he denies immortality; thousands of men, wise and foolish, have denied or doubted it from the beginning of time. Generally, though not invariably, it was the wise who doubted and the fools

who denied. What troubles me is that the denial is no longer rational; that any rationalist could see that it is not rational. Nobody needs a medical man to tell him that a dead man is materially as dead as mutton. Nobody need believe a medical man, any more than a muffin-man, or any other kind of man, upon the totally different metaphysical point of whether the abstract principle of energy has ceased or been withdrawn. The whole of that question of religious belief begins where all this leaves off; but it begins on a clear ground of agnosticism. Sir Arthur's ground is not clear and it is not agnostic. There was exactly the same muddle about the position of the Bishop of Birmingham when he uttered his celebrated howler on the subject of the sacramental philosophy. I am not here dealing with it considered as an attack on my religion. I am dealing with it as an attack on everybody's reason; or rather, as an example of the weakening of the reason, so that it cannot even attack. When Bishop Barnes suggested that chemical investigation might test Transubstantiation, it was no occasion for the skies to fall, as at a sublime blasphemy. It was simply that the solid earth of reason and common sense, on which we all walk, gave way under us with a faint crash. It was the human mind that had collapsed.

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no proof of that," or "You may believe in magic, but I do not," or "I have no reason to think that a princess can turn into a parrot." All these answers are reasonable in their relative degrees. But suppose somebody says, "I will test it; I will count all the feathers and find out if they look like feathers; I will show you that it flies like a parrot, screams like a parrot, claws and clutches like a parrot. . . ." Even in a fairy-tale the other man would have the sense to say: "Well, of course it does, idiot! I said she had turned into a parrot; and you are only repeating what I said. I think it is you that have turned into a parrot."

This is no place in which to explain why some of us hold that even fairy-tales are only false or fantastic shadows thrown by mysterious realities; and that such a mysterious reality can be present, under the appearances of the Sacred Elements. I need only say that anybody who really believes it fully understands how some people do not believe it. But whether or no anybody believes it, it is absurd to talk of anybody disproving it. All that any analysis could possibly prove is that the appearance continue to appear. But it was we who said, from the very beginning, that the appearances do continue to appear. Our doctrine concerns the metaphysical reality inside all appearances, and rational people either ignore such metaphysical things altogether, or reason about them on their own metaphysical plane. It is as if a man were to talk about digging up a cube root with a spade. As I say, the old lucid agnostics would have said it was impossible ultimately to define the mind. But they did not find it impossible to use the mind; and that is rapidly becoming the more pressing peril.

In short, we seem to have fallen to an altogether lower

level of scepticism. Men are endlessly repeating (and that repetition is itself a mark of the degeneration) that this or that has shaken the foundations of faith. What I complain of is that it has shaken the foundations of doubt. It has altered, and very much lowered, the grounds even of unbelief. The criticisms sound like the cries of children or savages, compared with the wary and well poised consistency of some of the old masters of negation. A Hottentot might offer to cut open a wafer and see whether it was a god. A Choctaw might say of a medicine man what is quoted above about a medical man. There must be something very queer and deleterious at work in the world, when this unreason saps, as it does sap, the minds of very acute and brilliant men, as well as those merely receptive. I am not at all disturbed about the future of the Faith; but I am disturbed about the future of the doubters, and the prospect of such very unphilosophic doubt; in which the very blasphemies have grown feeble and even stark nothing cannot remain unclouded or unconfused.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

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truth), but truth laboriously built upon fact, tested by observation in Experiment, and capable of verification by whoever will go to the trouble.

To assert as *true* doctrines like the Last Judgment, or the existence of Hell, or the sudden creation of the world by a personal God (let alone such now generally-abandoned and obviously false details as Noah's Ark, or the Garden of Eden, or the Star in the East), is to insult the scientist's idea of Truth, whose worship is an essential of whatever religion he may have, and should be an essential of any high religion; and the same holds good of any similar dogmatic assertion about personal immortality.

To proclaim the existence of this on insufficient evidence is just as offensive to Truth and the lovers of Truth as to deny its existence on insufficient evidence.

Our possible answers to the question, "Where are the Dead?" of course depend upon the kind of answer we give to the greater question of whether we survive death, and, if so, in what form. Let us remember that several different *kinds* of answer have been given to this greater question. Most primitive peoples, in days before the ideas "body" and "mind" were properly analysed, and when mind or spirit was ascribed to every phenomenon of Nature, thought that men survive in a pale, shadowy, not at all desirable, form of existence.

Life after death, both to the ancient Hebrews and the ancient Greeks, was a very poor sort of life. Some primitive peoples imagine that only certain elect men survive, while quite a number seek to improve the condition of the dead man in the next world by burying food and implements and ornaments with him—even by sacrificing beasts of burden and slaves to attend him hereafter.

With this type of belief, although it for thousands of

MY IDEA OF SURVIVAL

BY

PROFESSOR JULIAN S. HUXLEY

THE only correct answer to the question, "Where are the Dead?" consists, like the question, of four words, "We do not know." But man is so made that he is always most interested in those things about which he has no certain knowledge, and it is reasonable in every age to discuss such problems in the light of current thought.

But before entering upon my main task, I would like to correct one common misapprehension that came to light in the letter which started this discussion.

"A. J. C." in the *Daily News* of May 31, writes of two business men he heard talking in the train, that "they thought it was stupid and unnecessary that any scientist should seek to destroy the simple faith of religious minded persons by dogmatic statements that could not be proved."

I wonder how many people have reflected that every day thousands of "dogmatic statements that cannot be proved" are made by "religious minded persons," which wound and injure the faith of the scientist and damage the great cause for which he is fighting?

For the scientist, if he is worth his salt, believes in Truth, and not merely truth of logic or so-called truth of intention or artistic feeling (which is rather rightness than

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

truth), but truth laboriously built upon fact, tested by observation in Experiment, and capable of verification by whoever will go to the trouble.

To assert as *true* doctrines like the Last Judgment, or the existence of Hell, or the sudden creation of the world by a personal God (let alone such now generally-abandoned and obviously false details as Noah's Ark, or the Garden of Eden, or the Star in the East), is to insult the scientist's idea of Truth, whose worship is an essential of whatever religion he may have, and should be an essential of any high religion; and the same holds good of any similar dogmatic assertion about personal immortality.

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Life after death, both to the ancient Hebrews and the ancient Greeks, was a very poor sort of life. Some primitive peoples imagine that only certain elect men survive, while quite a number seek to improve the condition of the dead man in the next world by burying food and implements and ornaments with him—even by sacrificing beasts of burden and slaves to attend him hereafter.

With this type of belief, although it for thousands of

years dominated the minds of the great majority of mankind, and still is common among all backward peoples, we need no longer deal to-day. There are three other main types of belief. One is that of full personal survival; the second that of total extinction at death; and the third that of the personal spirit being merged in some spiritual essence much greater and more comprehensive than itself.

That of personal survival has, of course, by far the largest number of adherents at present. Votes, however, do not count in the search for truth. It is held in some form or other by all the great organized religions of the world, and also by many new sects and religions, such as Spiritualism. A variant of it is to suppose that only a certain number of men and women, who have truly disciplined their souls, survive, while the rest fade out, either at once or after a shorter or longer time.

What is the evidence on the matter? Of positive evidence (and when I speak of evidence I am talking of evidence that would satisfy a man of science) there is none. Evidence from so-called revelation is no evidence in the modern sense. Ghosts, if not always the product of imagination, are much more likely to be due to some as yet unexplained mental phenomenon akin to telepathy or clairvoyance than to survival.

Finally, there is the "evidence" of Spiritualism. I have read a good deal of this, and must confess that it leaves me as unmoved as the "evidence" periodically adduced by those who believe in the imminent end of the world. Some ninety per cent. is either fraudulent, or childish, or both. The remainder testifies to curious faculties in the medium, but definite evidence of survival, as opposed to interesting manifestations of the subconscious or possibly

telepathy or clairvoyance—that appears to me to be wholly lacking.

The most that can be said is that if survival could be proved by other means, a small proportion of the spiritualist evidence would be consonant with it.

On the other hand, the difficulties in accepting personal survival are admittedly great. On the one side there are physiological difficulties, on the other, those arising from a study of evolution. The physiological difficulties arise from the apparent impossibility of separating mind and matter, soul and body. It used to be said that all the activities of mind were dependent upon matter. That is quite true—witness the derangement of character that overtakes the patient who recovers from sleepy sickness or who is infected with the spirochaete which causes general paralysis. Witness the effects of alcohol and other drugs, the idiocy due to lack of sufficient secretion from the thyroid gland; the definite effects on men's faculties and memories of localized injuries to various regions of the brain.

And yet, though it is the truth, it is a one-sided truth. The full truth is that, the further we penetrate towards an understanding of the workings of the human organism, the more intimate does the mutual dependence of body and mind become. On the one hand, the mind (I am using mind in its broadest possible sense, to cover the emotional and spiritual as well as the intellectual side of our natures)—the mind is seen to be dependent not only on the brain, but on the whole chemical array of the ductless glands, and on the construction and working of the entire body.

On the other, it becomes clearer that living matter organized in the form of the human brain and kept in healthy life cannot help thinking and feeling—mental and

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

spiritual activity is not something separate, from the outside, but a necessary activity of that kind of living matter

In other words, the *body*, which is the material frame of a human being, and the *mind*, with which he thinks and feels, are only two aspects of the single reality, the living human individual himself

If there is this intimate dependence of body on mind and mind on body, it is difficult to imagine a mind without a body, and especially difficult to imagine a mind surviving in all its personality and individual distinctness without the material basis with which that distinctness was bound up

The argument from evolution is of another type. It asks where the line is to be drawn. If human spirits survive, why not the souls of the apes from which men descended? And so back, through monkeys and lower mammals, reptiles, amphibia, fish, and eventually to the lowest organisms known. There is no sharp line in the animal kingdom—why should there be one as regards survival?

And it must be acknowledged that, even if we might be disposed to grant immortality to an orang utan or a dog, it becomes a little ludicrous to do so to a newt or a worm or a jellyfish. As a matter of fact, precisely this same difficulty meets us in our own species as regards embryos. Even if we are prepared to grant that a new born baby, in spite of its limited faculties, has an immortal soul, what about a five-months foetus—or the hideous, tailed, inhuman creature that preceded it—or its fish like predecessor—or the mere mass of cells first formed by the egg—or the structureless microscopic egg itself? And yet each stage arises gradually and imperceptibly from the one before.

Because of such difficulties, many moderns believe that

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

total extinction of mind or soul occurs at physical death ; and if extinction is a hard saying for the many, that is no reason it should not be true ; at least we can truthfully say that the evidence for it is just as strong, or as weak, as that for personal survival.

None the less, it does not seem to be the only or the necessary conclusion from the evidence.

Let us turn to the analogy (a mere analogy, merely showing us possibilities, but proving nothing) of electricity. An electric battery is a source of electric current. The current is as dependent on the construction and proper working of the battery as the mind on that of the brain and body ; and yet the inference that electricity could not exist apart from batteries would be quite erroneous. It can be generated in various other ways, of which a dynamo and the electric organs of the torpedo and other fish are familiar examples ; and, apart from such powerful manifestations, we know that *every* change that occurs in matter is accompanied by—indeed, in part is—an electrical change.

There is nothing against the view that intense thought and feeling could spring into existence as the result of other groupings of the world-stuff than those afforded by our brains ; there is nothing against the view (and something, on grounds of evolutionary continuity, for it) that all changes in reality, in the world-stuff, are necessarily accompanied by changes in the mental order of things as well as by changes in the material order.

The upholders of personal survival will doubtless say that if that is so, there is nothing against a permanently surviving spirit-individuality being in some way given off at death, as a definite wireless message is given off by a sending apparatus working in a particular way. But

(apart from the grave difficulty as to what happens when the person at death is ill or feeble or in his second childhood) it must be remembered that the wireless message only becomes a message again when it comes in contact with a new, material structure—the receiver.

So with our possible spirit-emanation. It seems impossible to imagine it being more than a potentiality until it again gets in contact with a material receiver; it would wander through space as a possibility of thought and feeling, but would never think or feel unless again “embodied” in some way.

The last alternative is to suppose that, just as every scrap of material energy, whether liberated by an engine or the fall of a stone, a volcanic explosion or a steam-hammer, is never lost, but returns to the ever-constant store of energy which is the source of all physical activity in the universe—so spiritual or mental activity is not lost, but all of it returns, in some way not yet understood, to a store or pool of spiritual reality which is the non-material counterpart of energy.

This is, on the whole, the hypothesis towards which I would lean—not, I repeat, because of any positive evidence in its favour, but because it seems to present fewer difficulties than the others.

The idea of personal, individual survival, especially in any definite place, does seem to me to be ruled out. Our personalities are so based on body that it is really impossible to think of survival which would be in any true sense *personal* without a body of sorts.

And then there is the future. Man has existed for perhaps a million years; there is every likelihood of his surviving, and surviving in numbers greater than to-day, for a thousand million years more. This world is getting

crowded enough ; but the thought of a next world with a population of immortal spirits running into tens of billions is not to be seriously faced. Personal Immortality was a good deal easier to believe in before geology and astronomy had enlarged our time-scale.

I can think of *something* being given off which would bear the same relation to men and women as a wireless message to the transmitting apparatus ; but in that case "the dead" would, so far as one can see, be nothing but disturbances of different patterns wandering through the universe until either they were destroyed or came back to actuality of consciousness by making contact with something which could work as a receiving apparatus for mind.

And I can think of our personalities being lost, blended, taken up into some general reservoir of mind and spirit. In that case, presumably, the dead would not be anywhere in particular, but would become part and parcel of something universal and all pervading. Perhaps that universal reservoir of spirit transcends Space and Time—is it not true that we in our minds can hold in a single mental grasp the near and the distant, the present and the past ? And if so, the question, "Where are the dead ?" will need no answer.

THE MEANING OF HEAVEN

BY

DR. HENRY TOWNSEND

(Principal of the Baptist College, Manchester.)

A STUDENT said to me recently : " What is wrong with the psychologists ? " He had been startled by the answers to a questionnaire which sought to elicit the attitude of educated people to the future life. Only 19 per cent. of the psychologists who were approached expressed their belief in immortality against 37 per cent. of the biologists and 51 per cent. of the historians. Is there something in the work of the psychologist which tends to disintegrate his belief in survival after death ?

In the study of mental processes why does he reach the conclusion that there are thoughts but no thinker, feelings but no self that feels, volitions but no personal will ? The answer is that he narrows consciousness down to the limits of a problem in chemistry. As a scientific worker he is entitled to attempt some limitation of his subject ; he is not entitled to pronounce on ultimate facts such as life, or dismiss the unity and the continuity of the self as a fiction.

The science of anthropology has also been battering at the gates of religious authority and has helped to knock

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

the bottom clean out of the old ecclesiastical theories of human nature. Whether concerning the origin of man or the destiny of man the old creeds and articles of religion need drastic revision. All anthropologists by no means agree with Sir Arthur Keith.

It will be well, however, for the Churches to recognize that anthropologists and psychologists are offering the most serious challenge to the doctrine of the future life. Nor can the old defences keep these newer sciences at bay. We are told that the dead are in the grave; that their dust has returned to the earth, that the flame of their life has gone out. •

The ground of this definite statement regarding the dead needs careful examination. Sir Arthur Keith affirms it because he concludes that Mind has a material basis. He is saying nothing new and we might add, straightway, that as a scientist he cannot prove it.

The late T. H. Huxley was the father of this modern school and said the same thing in his generation. His argument was that "mind is foam thrown up as the result of the activity of the brain"; that "mind is a mist which rises from the surface of the brain"; that "as the liver secretes bile so the brain secretes thought."

Thoughts, feelings and volitions are explained as the result of chemical changes in the grey cells of the brain. Our conscious life, so intense in its conflicts, so real in its experience of love, anger, triumph and defeat, is accounted for by the mechanics of the nervous system. If this theory could be proved, if it were an inference to which human thought at its best consented, there would be no self to survive and immortality would be impossible.

In the lecture which originated this discussion, Sir Arthur Keith has laid himself open to criticism which cuts

the ground from under his feet. He concludes that "the actions of the human brain depend on deeply seated impulses inherited from a purely animal ancestry," and these ancient impulses use the human brain as their instrument. These impulses are the instincts which are essential for the continuity and maintenance of the human race. We must ask how these inborn instincts came to be, for however strange the claim may seem, the modern argument for survival after death begins with the fact of these primal instincts, rooted as they are in living organisms.

Consider the sex instinct and the herd instinct. They are selective, and where there is selection there is mind at work. If Sir Arthur is held to his argument that mind is the product of brain, then these primal instincts should have been produced by brain. These instincts reveal purposive activity which is inexplicable apart from Mind. Even the amœba has its game of life, adapts itself to its environment and competes successfully.

How long are modern scientific workers going to linger in the old-billiard-ball-kind-of-universe of a discarded materialism? No one can prove that living organisms have been evolved from what for lack of a better term we will call *inorganic matter*. Our growing knowledge of animal life is leading us away from the mechanistic interpretation of activity. There is more recognition than ever among physiologists of what we will call finalism in the life process.

The question really is, Did the chemical action of the brain cells create life? This pushes the inquiry further back than Sir Arthur Keith does. The problem of Mind is bound up with the fact of life. And if brain activity did not create life is it likely that brain activity controls

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

the cessation of life? The life process is controlled by a definite end. In the life of man, who is the goal of the evolutionary process, does the End which controls him at his best in this world demand for him a world beyond?

The End which controls man at his highest is Moral. We know that goodness, truth and love are worth living for. And such moral realities cannot be explained apart from their ultimate source in a Person who is good. If the scientist or the philosopher demurs to this statement, and tells me that I am taking a leap and claiming objective reality for moral values, I answer that I am capable of testing my moral experience.

I am as entitled to trust my self-consciousness of God as the controlling End of life as I am to trust my judgment of the sun and the moon and the stars. My moral consciousness is a fact, and convinces me that moral values are not disintegrated into dust and ashes. And because moral values are conserved I am entitled to believe that personal values are conserved. The moral consciousness implies and demands both God and the survival of the self.

The unique moral values of history were enshrined in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. The highest ethical reality in history is His Personality and the central moral quality in Jesus was Love. It is an indisputable fact that in fellowship with Jesus Christ multitudes have achieved a personality in which the inmost reality is also love. I cannot believe that such personality perishes. It is the verdict of the sanest and noblest religious consciousness that whosoever believeth in Him does *NOT PERISH*, but has even now the quality of life which is eternal.

Moral distinctions will, therefore, have considerable bearing on the conditions of the future life. To ignore

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

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these moral distinctions in the discussion of survival is to refuse to face the most impressive facts this side of the grave. After all, moral facts are more decisive than anything else in this life. We claim that immortality can only be estimated in terms of the quality of life. To project our ideas of Time and Space into the future will not help us. The dead and living populations of this planet create no insoluble problem. Death is merciful. If anyone doubts this let him remember Swift's horrible picture of endless life in this world. We must not think of the future life as endless time, which might easily be endless boredom, as Tennyson has expressed it in his description of Tithonus.

And whether there will be room for us all in the next world is not serious. As James says, the space of one imagination in no way interferes with the space of another. At death, moral values as they are enshrined in human personality are naked to the sight of God. What happens then?

Do we slip back into the ocean of Being and lose ourselves? No! Do we transmigrate into another form of earthly existence? We reply that transmigration, a theory which is only kept alive by an overwhelming sense of justice, offers no solution. There can be no punishment nor reward to the man who does not remember why he is punished or why he is rewarded. Then what happens? We answer that those who have been for God and Christ in this world live on and see their Redeemer's Face. This is what we mean by heaven. It is a continuous achievement of personality in the presence of God.

Now I do not say that immortality is an achievement. So what happens to the man who has refused to achieve the moral values which were possible for him? Does his

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

life trickle out? Dante saw multitudes of these souls in hell. He says they were never alive; they refused to fight for their life and their selfhood; they took part neither for God nor His enemies, and the world suffers no rumour of them to survive. Personally, I will be no dogmatist regarding the ultimate future of the moral slacker. Concerning him Jesus speaks of the outer darkness. He had his opportunity, and with his eyes open he chose to sink in the scale. We must not allow sentimentality, either wet or dry, to obscure the moral lines which Jesus drew through life.

This age has forgotten the fact of moral judgment. What else is there but darkness for the man who has seen the light and turned his face from it?

I am more concerned over the little child who never had a decent start in life, who was probably born drunk into the world. I will conclude by saying that there is no solution of these staggering inequalities of opportunity and achievement, neither in this world nor the next, unless it is the solution of Eternal Love which judges aright.

IN THE HANDS OF LOVE

BY

THE REV H R L SHIFFARD

THE responsibility of attempting to answer this question is great, and I feel it keenly, for upon the answer so much depends. War experience emphasized how many bereaved people there are who sit from book to book, or from teacher to teacher, hoping to find certain proof that their dead still live and remember them. It would be so terrible if any chance words of mine should confuse or hurt these seekers, and I do want those who may read this article to understand that I cannot pretend to give them any greater authority than my own simple beliefs.

If that is understood, we may as well face the fact that in this direct age half answers and loose-thinking can have no place. I think we are courageous enough to suffer rather than to hypnotize ourselves into accepting proofs which our reason questions or denies. That is as it should be, for if it means that our questions are more difficult to answer, it means also that when we are satisfied our belief will be real and enduring.

It is important to recognize this modern insistence on simplicity and frankness, for it helps us to see why so many to-day cannot accept the orthodox proofs of im-

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

mortality which religious people sometimes infer must suffice. But it explains something more, and that is the tendency to seek evidence of survival by purely intellectual methods. Certainly it would be comforting to be able to sit down and prove logically that immortality is a definite cog in the working of the universe, but it seems to me that here we are up against a difficulty, for there comes a time, I think, when, having pursued every path of wisdom and inquiry, a man comes to the certain knowledge that with the intellect he can prove nothing.

That may sound depressing, but actually it is a discovery worth making. It rules out one method of approach, and it forces him to take a stand with his back against some other wall. It forces him, because he cannot shake off that deep instinct which insists that the dead do not die. The belief in their survival is as old as the world itself, but when a man has proved the impotence of intellect alone, he may begin to understand that we do not believe in immortality because we have proved it, but that we try to prove it because we believe in it. Then it is that what is known as faith takes hold and gives him, not certainty, but a sufficiency of hope.

Perhaps the first stumbling-block to faith is our doubt whether there is much to be gained in the sum of things by our individual survival. After all, we haven't made such a splendid affair of our own lives that Eternity would suffer if we happen to be snuffed out altogether. But surely Eternity would suffer if lives like Francis of Assisi's ended with death, and we all know quite simple people of whom it is impossible to believe that because they are what we call dead, their lives are finally ended.

When we remember these people, whom we loved, and the beauty of their lives, when we remember how gallantly

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they passed over and the deep peace that came over their dear faces as they lay dying and dead, we may surely vow that somehow, somewhere the dead are in the hands of Love. What Love represents, no man can say, but if we are able to believe that the power behind the universe is friendly, and I am fortunate enough to have come through to that belief, and that ultimately Love is in control, surely we can rest at times from our anxious questionings.

And now we come a stage further in our problem. Where are the dead? I am not going to pretend that I know, but it does seem to me that they are not likely to be in surroundings of mere genial amiability. I believe most of us will desire an opportunity of atoning for wrong things which we have done deliberately, but I also believe, so strongly, that at our death we go somewhere where Love permits us to go, to make good perhaps through ages, and that ultimately all the Father's children will be in the Father's house.

If this seems vague, I cannot help it, and if you tell me that it has not answered the problem, I must admit at once that it has not. I know nothing about the mansions of Heaven, but if you can secure a sure and accurate description of them that is doubt-proof, please send it to me. But, frankly, it seems to me unimportant. All that matters, to my mind, is that we go on, and that through our belief in Love, we may go on without fear.

Whether you can agree with that depends, I suppose, on what sort of person you think God is. If He is a fierce Jehovah, I confess there is little hope, but if He is the God of Jesus Christ, then I cannot believe that His mercy and loving kindness can ever fail, or that He can ever rest until one by one, perhaps through toil and suffering,

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

but always in hope, His children have reached the Home where He would have them be

If God be Jehovah, then I confess that life for me is a mockery and even a grim joke. But if He be the Father God, then though we may well fear as we set out on the last journey, and though we may speculate and doubt and worry as to where our loved ones are, yet life is working towards a purpose—the ultimate triumph and overlordship of Love

And now may I tell you one experience which bears on the subject? I remember being at the death bed of a man who for many years had professed an aggressive agnosticism—and, by the way, never take the advice of a man who sneers about any high matters. Just before he died he opened his eyes and looked at his son, who was standing by, and said one word, “Resurgam”—I shall arise again. That answered my problem more easily than any book I have ever read, or any lecture I have ever attended on the question of survival, for I think it would have been impossible for that strange man, whose life in the opinion of those who watched him had been a good deal less than serviceable, to have had that look of hope in his eyes as he spoke, unless he was going where Love was

Here I must end. I am sorry if my answer has not been direct enough, but I can only repeat that in my most real moments I feel in my soul that the dead are alive and in the hands of Love, and that even I, who am only a would-be Christian with a child-like faith, can catch at times, as I stand by the death bed of someone I love, the echo of the Father's words, “This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.”

IMMORTALITY

BY

HILAIRE BELLOC

PEOPLE to-day are perpetually rediscovering very old things. That is natural, I suppose, to an epoch of discovery, though I confess I should be better contented if they would only be humble enough to surmise at least that certain ideas were very old and not suddenly sprung from their own creative brains. Thus the discussion on evolution which is as old as the human race, or at any rate as old as all recorded history of human reasoning, is beginning at last to be treated as something worth handling, and not merely a thing to be making violent affirmations about. Again the infinitely old discussion upon the modes of human government is becoming popular. People no longer simply take it for granted throughout Europe that democracy must be the best, and even those who do think it the best are beginning at long last, to ask what democracy is.

Now among the old things thus recently discovered, and therefore seemingly novel—novel at least to the more backward brains of Europe—is the discussion upon human immortality. It is fair to smile at those who, coming abruptly upon such hoary debates, believe themselves

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

to be pioneers It is fair enough to laugh at such a mixture of vanity and ignorance But the laughter leads nowhere It is our business rather to convince error than to scorn it

I should think it probable that this discussion on human immortality was the very oldest present among men, from the day men, through whatever accident, either lost full knowledge or began to discuss what they did not fully know For though we have plenty of evidence which makes it look as though man had always envisaged a life of some kind after death (evidence drawn from prehistoric remains and the more doubtful analogies of primitive people), yet in the nature of things there can be no prehistoric evidence upon the *denial* of survival You can dig up ornaments buried with the dead, you cannot dig up the sneers of those who said that such rites were futile And as for evidence drawn from primitive races, it is not wholly satisfactory for two reasons first, that among not a few there is little, and among some, apparently, no idea of survival, secondly, that, after all, they have been as long on the earth as we have, and have had plenty of time to develop illusions

But we have very old records of the debate in the shape of words written down long after the inception of such ideas, but clearly stretching back to the beginning of inquiry, and the moment we can fully observe men going thoroughly into the affair, we find the two Schools—those who accept and those who deny survival—whether among the Asiatic philosophers or the Western On the one side ‘ We do not die but are changed ’ On the other ‘ It shall be with us as though we were not ’

Well, then there is nothing new about the arguments pro and con, but that does not detract from their

importance, and I propose here to set out as briefly as I can what those arguments seem to me to be

In the first place I am bound, writing as a Catholic, to define the Catholic position, but of course with this proviso, that I do not expect that position to have influence upon those who are not of my communion. The Catholic believes in the immortality of the human soul (and, for that matter, in the very existence of the human soul) on Authority. He may indeed discover the truth of Immortality by the use of his unaided reason, but in the main he believes it because he is told it is true by the voice of the Church, which, when it defines any one of the comparatively few, but tremendous things which it has defined, is for him the voice of God. He is more certain of this than of anything except his own existence. He relies upon that Authority as the saintly old Bible Christian nurse who brought me up relied upon the literal Authority of James I's English Bible.

HAVING concluded by the use of observation and reason that the Church has this supreme power and right to teach, I accept what she teaches and trust her more than I do the evidence of my senses. Whether I can *imagine* the thing believed or not is to me of no intellectual consequence at all.

But, I repeat, no one who is not a Catholic can be expected even to consider that position. If I am arguing whether an outline seen from far off at sea is a cloud or an island, I must not argue from the map if the man with whom I am arguing begins by telling me that he thinks the map has been made up out of somebody's head and that, therefore he will not accept its evidence. I might add, before leaving this point, that we Catholics believe our authority to be Divine from observation and reason,

because it fits in with every other thing that we know, while others reject what does not fit in with some pre conceived theory on cause and effect

It is the old opposition between the Catholic attitude of Faith based upon Reason and the anti-Catholic attitude of Reason based upon Faith For our opponents—especially the scientific sceptics—must admit (if they closely analyze their own position) that their supposed certitudes are arrived at by the use of Reason based upon Faith a blind faith in their particular Philosophy of cause and effect

But to press this most interesting point would be to enter into the whole dialogue between the Catholic and non Catholic position and I am here dealing with a much *more particular matter*

What are the general arguments for and against the survival of bodily death by human personality?

We must begin by observing that the arguments against such survival are very strong

I say nothing about the supposed argument from our new knowledge of the human frame Any clear thinker can see that no amount of further accumulated detail in physical observation can add to the overwhelming physical fact apparent to all ignorant or learned, that when the body is dead it is dead No new specialized knowledge on the brain for instance, can tell us more than men have always known to wit, that 'if the brains are out the man is dead' Let us discard such irrelevant stuff and turn to the real arguments

St Thomas Aquinas, as was his wont in dealing with these awful matters, has summed up in the tersest and most pregnant form the three main groups of arguments which all men naturally entertain, and upon which the

deniers of immortality continually rely (you will find them in the Sixth Article of the Seventh-fifth Question of the *Summa*). I will give them here, not in his order, but in the order in which they appeal most to my contemporaries.

First, there is the undoubted truth that the soul exists *in thinking*. Now we think wholly under physical conditions. We cannot think without physical images in our minds; we receive all the food for thought through our senses. When, therefore, we are no longer in a position to do this, when physical conditions have ceased, thinking ceases; and, supposing a permanent cessation, the soul is not.

Next, whatever came out of nothingness, may return to nothingness. Modern men do not put it that way but they continually use the argument in another form. Our consciousness came out of unconsciousness. It "developed" (as we say in modern language) out of an unconscious condition. Therefore, it should reasonably return to that condition, or at least there would seem to be no reason why it should not.

But the third argument (which is the first in St. Thomas's order) is that which appeals most strongly to my contemporaries, I think, and this is, that things of a like origin and a like mode of action have presumably a like end. Our generation, our maintenance of life, are on the same model as those of the vegetable or the beast, or any other living thing. They grow old and decay, and so do we. They disintegrate to exist no longer; so shall we. And he quotes those powerful Scriptural words: "Man has nothing more than the beast . . . the death of man and beast is one, and the condition of both is equal."

To these arguments the great philosopher adds elsewhere another which I for myself find to be of most powerful effect, though it is not in tune with the language of to-day. He points out that a thing is what it is on account of a union between matter and form. Thus a vase is what it is not because of its material, clay, but because of its material having had added to it a certain character of shape, content, etc.; its *form* makes it a vase. Destroy the union of matter and form and the vase disappears. Crush it to powder and it is a vase no more. But the soul is the form of the body. A man is what he is by his character: his thoughts, his inward disposition, and all that makes a self out of his mere flesh. Become a corpse, the form has disappeared; of that material, flesh, the essential to making of it a man exists no more.

This is the argument on which Mr. Shaw relied in his example of the Brick in a recent letter.

Now what are the counter arguments?

In the first place, emphasize this—that without faith not one of them is conclusive in all men's eyes. They are converging. They create an increasing probability. They do not establish certainty for all men.

Before dealing with them, it is well to brush aside the commoner kinds of support. Thus the idea that a belief in immortality is a consolation, though perhaps an indication of truth, is worthless for intellectual conviction. To trust in "consolations" alone is as base intellectually as taking drugs and as worthless. It would be a consolation to an embarrassed man to foster the illusion that he was about to inherit a fortune, but he does well to avoid such self-deception. Moreover, the popular conception that survival necessarily involves happiness, is intellectually negligible. Regarded in itself, apart

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

from other considerations, it may be happy, unhappy, or neither.

No, the strong arguments are of another kind, and for my part, though I will hardly affirm it (for no one can judge himself apart from his own experience), I should imagine that they would suffice to establish my judgment, even without that altogether stronger foundation, accepted doctrine.

The first is the nature of man, which we all feel ourselves, which we all observe in others and from which we cannot get away. He is not on the scale of this earth. He is paradoxically at once lower and higher than what is around him. He is also, or can be also, worse and better, and that in a different mode from what is around him.

All philosophies (it is the universal burden of Pascal, among a host of profound thinkers) are founded upon either the misery of man or his greatness—or, indeed, in the case of one philosophy (but only of one, the Christian), upon the reconciliation of that greatness and that misery. Start out with a conviction of man's greatness, not necessarily subject to misery on this earth, and sooner or later you will find that you are deceiving yourself. Facts are against you. Start out with his miserable subjection, denying his super-mundane greatness, and you will find the same. He is not a beast yet he suffers here not only more, but more radically than the beasts. He is not here beatified, yet he feels capable of complete felicity. On that I think we are all agreed.

Now if this nature of man, with the moral sense for its most active expression, is of such a sort, how can you fit it in with man as nothing but an animal on this earth?

By whichever facet you look at it, either by the com-

monest facet of remedy for injustice, or by that which used to be a common aspect a generation ago, of reward and punishment for good and evil deeds, or by considering the magnitude of your subject—and there are hundreds of other angles—you come back to the truth that man is not here in his element.

The second strong argument, which converges upon this first is the argument from personality ; conscious intelligent personality. That quality in man by which he is not only conscious, but can stand outside his own consciousness, compare ideas, and deal with conceptions not subject to space and time. •

Now we know that personality is more than non-personality. The greater does not come out of the lesser save by addition. You cannot get a quart out of a pint bottle. Only Personality will produce personality, something more personal, perhaps, but not less. Admitting personality in man, personality is behind the universe. The process of the universe has a meaning, the end of man becomes rational. But if his end is upon this earth, that end is not rational in the ultimate sense of the word "rational." It does not complete his being. It leaves not only loose ends, but loose ends of infinitely greater import than the woven strands which build up his earthly life.

That is how I see the affair. I admit I am handicapped in putting it abstractedly, because I accept it, not as an abstraction but as part of a Divine philosophy wherein all is at accord. I feel, under the effect of the Faith, not only with emotion, but by the process of all my being and especially with the lucid cogitative part of myself, two great quotations, centuries old, often recited triumphantly in song ; with these I will end.

It is Sir Arthur Keith's dogmatism that one may criticize. He is speaking dogmatically for the whole human race, and it is, quite obviously, impossible for him to do so. His work in his own sphere has been thorough, patient, and courageous, but it is a limited sphere, and his personality also is limited. His utterance as to the agreement between scientists and doctors on these points is quite obviously false, scientists and doctors are quite certainly not agreed, and when one has the opportunity to talk with any one of them one finds that their views are directed much more by their own individual personality than by their powers of reasoning or observation.

For instance, I myself had, a week or two ago, dinner with one of the greatest brain surgeons in the world. A man of fifty, he has had a vast experience, is quite without sentimentality or any kind of religious fanaticism, and he told me that after many years of work on the brain he had come to an exactly opposite opinion from Sir Arthur Keith.

The more he worked on the brain the more he realized that it was nothing but a telephone board obeying orders from some further force or power, and that, in his opinion, doctors and scientists were as far from the beginnings of knowledge of this force as they had ever been.

This is perhaps a platitude, but I am writing this article from my own point of view, that is, on behalf of the plain man, who is colossally ignorant, persistently inquisitive and eagerly aware of the mystery of life. We plain men, in England at least, have had a vile education. At school we learnt almost nothing, and since we have grown up life has been so full, so busy and so deeply involved that we have had no time to acquire real knowledge. We listen to the scientists and doctors who, every once and again,

try to put things into simple terms for us, we read books that are made simple and short for our benefit, we listen to pronouncements, we pick up what we can.

Our interest in spiritual affairs is as strong as ever it was; we feel, many of us, that it is pressing in upon us all the time, whether we wish it or no. For some of us, as we grow older, this interest in spiritual things becomes the most important element in our lives; for many of us, of course, this is not so, and I am definitely not writing for them. But for those of us to whom this is an increasing preoccupation very little real guidance and help is offered.

Once upon a time definite dogmas gave, apparently, complete reassurance to such men as ourselves. For many of us that time is past; we watch with a kind of envy those lucky ones who are still comforted and reassured by the dogmas of a final creed. For those of us who are not reassured—and I say this with nothing but appreciation for the many splendid and self-sacrificing ministers of different churches—the declarations of these churches take too much for granted, they beg the question for us every time.

We cannot include ourselves in the company of those who are convinced of immortality, and we most certainly cannot follow the positive assertions of a materialist like Sir Arthur Keith.

All we can say, whether it be to the Bishop of Birmingham or to the Bishop of Oxford, or to Sir Oliver Lodge, or to any other leader of a religious school of thought, is: "You are fortunate to be so sure; we envy you your good fortune."

It may be, as has been said, that we shall find after physical death that what man has believed on this earth,

that he is afterwards given for truth; that would be perhaps a happy and just consummation. But in the state of mind that is ours, most honestly striving as we do for truth, what is there that we can feel for certainty?

Edward Carpenter has said somewhere that the two experiences of our earthly life that are more than three dimensional are love and death, and that great saying, as I think it, does lead us somewhere. We are willing, in our modesty, to agree with Sir Arthur Keith that we are nothing but a little chemical substance created materially, ending materially, but this belief is for ever contradicted by our personal experience. Not with all of us, of course. I have two great friends who are convinced, just as Sir Arthur Keith has been convinced. But one's history is individual, you cannot deny the emotions that you are given because others have not felt those emotions, and when you have found that many beside yourself have had exactly similar experiences you are forced to agree that some element that is not material seems to intermingle constantly with human life.

Suppose that to-night it were definitely proved to me beyond shadow of doubt that Sir Arthur Keith's words were true, even then I should not believe it. Nothing can rob me of my conviction, always increasing, that at certain moments of my life, encounters with death, the love of one or two persons, experiences of beauty in poetry, in music, in landscape, in conduct, I have passed into regions that are not material and physical.

I perceive further, although I am hampered here by my desperately limited education, that the laws and wonders of the universe are so amazing that no conjecture, no magic, no wonder of ultimate experience is impossible.

In Messrs. Benn's sixpenny series there have recently

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

been published two little books, one on the Stellar System, one on the Atom. The statements in them must be child's play to Sir Arthur Keith, nevertheless I challenge him to read them and not to bow his head before his own limitless ignorance.

It is true that one reads these little books and sinks in contemplation of these vastnesses into infinite insignificance. I have only to rise in an aeroplane above London streets and to look down upon that little struggling mass of ant-like figures and again I feel the infinite insignificance of the human being.

And then, thus looking, I realize that in every single one of those tiny midgets every impulse of wonder and splendour and contact with infinite horizons is working. Out of such a midget there have proceeded the spiritual greatness of Hamlet, the magnificence of the Fifth Symphony, the glorious simplicity of St. Francis, the visions of Dante, the almost divine strength of Michael Angelo.

But I can go further than this. Were I to know all, I would find in any single human being, no matter from where he might have come, enough courage under supreme difficulty, sufficient unselfishness against the pressure of unceasing egotism, enough aspiration held too stoutly against every material temptation, to prove to me that Sir Arthur Keith's words entirely fail to cover the ground of our experience.

Facts such as those which trouble your correspondent, A. J. C., as to where all the dead go surely need not disturb us. Whatever form of survival human personality may assume after death it will not be, we may be sure, under our present earthly conditions. The discoveries of science have already shown us, as facts, wonders that would only a few years ago have seemed miracles. Time is moving

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

backwards as well as forwards, there is no limit, it seems, to the increasing horizons of the universe

With our little knowledge we are driven back to the truth of our own deeper experiences. Life, as William James said in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, "seems to us like a fight, as though something were being definitely won or lost by our spiritual success or failure. It is the only explanation that covers all the ground, and if we look back upon the top moments of our own experience surely most of us must agree that once and again, in love, in death, in perception of beauty, in deep moral struggles, we have realized a contact with worlds that are not material and cannot, it seems to us, be determined by physical death

THE DEAD ARE ALIVE

BY

THE REV. R. J. CAMPBELL, M.A., D.D.

THE correspondent (A. J. C.) who recently addressed a letter to the *Daily News* under the above title asks a question of such vital importance, not only to the individual, but to the well-being of human society even in this world, that it ought to be frankly and seriously faced.

He desires an answer, and I propose to give him mine, but before doing so it is necessary to address myself to some points in his letter whose elucidation may help to clear the ground for an approach to the major issue.

First, A. J. C. appears to be conscious of the difficulty of realizing that what he describes as the countless billions of human beings who have lived their little lives on this earth during the past half-million years or so and successively passed out of it are still alive somewhere. "Every time a human being dies he drops into that abyss of numbers—almost too deep for thought. What happens to the poor bewildered soul? Where is the place of the little child in that universe of the dead? Where and in what manner is the eternal army assembled and disposed?"

A. J. C. is not the only person who reasons thus. One is constantly coming across this way of stating what many

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

back to the ^{back} feel to be a perplexing problem. But, taking it at more than its superficial significance—I mean assuming for the moment the provisional validity of sense perception—is not the universe big enough to accommodate all the life it has yet produced? A celebrated essayist of the last century, John Foster, once computed that all the men, women and children of all the generations that have ever existed since human history began on this planet could if still alive stand bolt upright in Yorkshire and yet leave room for more. This sounds incredible, but is sufficiently near the truth to illustrate the disproportion between mankind considered as a total entity and the vastness of the world of worlds wherein he dwells.

When we remember the speed at which light travels and try, however vainly, to imagine what a light year means and to understand what astronomers tell us, that it takes an enormous number of these light years for a ray to reach us from some of the more distant stars, we need hardly waste time in discussing matters of relative cubic capacity. There is room enough for us all without entering into speculative arguments about the fourth dimension.

Even so, however, we are compelled to think at times in terms of other planes of reality, we cannot escape doing so. The more closely we scrutinize this world of appearances the less self sufficient is it perceived to be. "Things which are seen are not made out of things which do appear." As Professor J. Arthur Thomson says we have, after all, only a pinhole view of the universe. And H. G. Wells, of all people in the world, writes with true inspiration when he makes one of his characters say, in "Men Like Gods," that the universe revealed to our senses is "but one of countless universes that move together in time, that lie against one another, endlessly, like the leaves of a book."

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

And all of them are as nothing in the endless multitudinous systems and dimensions that surround them."

But perhaps it is the thought of this very thing that principally troubles A. J. C. Man seems so puny in presence of the immensities of the universal order. What can a poor little child dying in hospital of an incurable disease matter to the tremendous and overwhelming interplay of cosmic forces? Who cares what he suffers; and when his little flicker of life is extinguished, can we readily believe in the possibility that it will burn more brightly in another sphere?

back to the behaviour of one of the frailest organisms that live in and sail on the sea

This little creature has a membranous shell that could be crushed by a touch, but at the approach of a storm it buries itself deep in the bosom of the ocean, the waters of which are at once its protection and sustenance

So is it with the soul of man in relation to the all encompassing, all sustaining reality wherein we live and move and have our being. Everything must be immediately and equally present to the mind of God, for God is the very ground of its existence

This is not a begging of the question under discussion. Assuming that the eternal reality in which we are immersed, and which is the source of the entire cosmic process, including ourselves, has mind and purpose at all, there need be no difficulty whatever in believing that that mind and purpose are as definitely and minutely capable of ordering what happens to the meanest flower that blows as of shaping the course of Arcturus and building up Orion. The infinitely great is not one whit more marvellous in organization than the infinitely small

A J C does not ask about God. It is the hope of personal immortality that he dwells upon, and herein is the weakness of his plea. He blames the clergy for the fewness and vagueness of their allusions to this important subject. He is right about the fact, but the culpability does not rest with the clergy alone. The truth is that the reaction from the other worldism of the earlier half of last century has gone too far. It was quite justified at the time, for a selfish type of Christian belief had come to occupy the foreground of interest among Churchgoers, a type that neglected social justice and concentrated on the preparation of the soul for a blissful life beyond the grave. In conse-

quence, as Dean Inge points out, we have for the last two generations or more been doing the opposite; we have been placing the emphasis on the duty of making life more livable in this world and saying little or nothing about the world to come.

The Dean says that a working-class audience listens with marked impatience to any appeal to its sympathies which makes reference to belief in personal survival after death; the working man promptly concludes that he is being cheated of his due in this world by being offered a cheque on a bank whose solvency he greatly doubts, the bank of heaven. If the Dean had said that all other classes in the community are equally sceptical of the solvency of that bank he would not have exaggerated.

The clergy are no more to blame for this than other people; it is the spirit of the age. A. J. C.'s letter is symptomatic of a change of feeling, a change to be greatly welcomed. People are now beginning to ask whether there is any reliable evidence that the soul survives the death of the body. They are coming to realize anew that this is a far more momentous question than any that is concerned with material values alone.

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The evidence exists and is accessible on two different levels. The one is that of scientifically demonstrated fact, and the other and higher is that of spiritual experience. The former is not easily obtained; it has to be sought among the baffling and elusive phenomena which constitute the subject-matter of *Psychical Research*. I do not say of *Spiritualism*, for I have little first-hand acquaintance with *Spiritualism* and would prefer not to rely upon its claims as a cult. I have not the smallest desire to impugn

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

the testimony of Spiritualists as a body, they are probably no worse and no better than other people, but it seems to me that they are insufficiently critical of the data on which they base their assurance that they are in touch with the dead. Psychical Research is on a different footing, it is concerned with facts and facts only, whether they support the hypothesis of survival or not.

I have been a member of the Psychical Research Society for more than thirty years without attending any of its regular meetings, my object in belonging to it being primarily that of obtaining the Proceedings and studying them month by month, and I here solemnly affirm that I believe the case for survival is proved. Nine tenths of the supernatural phenomena which point in this direction may be otherwise explained—perhaps ninety nine hundredths. But there is a residuum which cannot be otherwise explained. I believe that communication between the living and the so-called dead does occasionally take place.

The Society as such has not committed itself to this view, but many of its most distinguished members have done so. A Society which has included among its Presidents such men of eminence as the present Earl of Balfour, the late Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, and Professor Gilbert Murray has to be treated with respect, and if its methods seem too slow and cautious for some of its adherents this is a fault on the right side.

Men of the high scientific reputation of Sir William Crookes and Sir Oliver Lodge cannot be regarded as either fools or liars, and when these men tell us that they are convinced by the sheer force of evidence that the soul survives death, neither Sir Arthur Keith nor anyone else has the right to deny that evidence without examining it.

MY EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL

BY

PROFESSOR H J SPOONER

THE statement of Sir Arthur Keith, that there is no survival after death of the spirit or soul, will most surely and most unhappily tend to affect the feelings, the faith, and the most sacred beliefs of countless people

But such a dogmatic statement relating to that imperishable adjunct of the mind, even from such a great anatomical authority, will certainly be challenged, particularly by orthodox believers who have correlated what science philosophy and theology can teach to support the faith that is in them, and such believers in a death surviving consciousness will surely be tempted to quote the immortal Bard

*There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy*

Sir Arthur's reference to the flame of a burning candle was not a particularly happy one, in the light of the doctrine of energy, as when the flame (the manifest spirit of the burning candle) becomes extinct, its heat being imperishable, it may ignite a new flame, in accordance

with the explanation given by the great physicist Helmholtz :

“The flame, even, which, of all processes in inanimate Nature, is the closest type of life, may become extinct, but the heat which it produces continues to exist—indestructible, imperishable, as an invisible motion, now agitating the molecules of ponderable matter, and then radiating into boundless space as the vibration of an ether. Even there it retains the characteristic peculiarities of its origin, and it reveals its history to the inquirer who questions it by the spectroscope. United afresh, these rays may ignite a new flame, and thus, as it were, acquire a new bodily existence.”

Now science is exact, regular, arranged knowledge ; and it has been truly said that “the man of science ought to go on honestly, patiently, diffidently, observing and storing up his observations, and carrying his reasonings unflinchingly to their legitimate conclusions, convinced that it would be treason to the majesty at once of science and of religion if he sought to help either by swerving ever so little from the straight rule of truth.”

But if science cannot prove that the impalpable entity we call the soul is present in the mortal body, it cannot, I submit, disprove or deny the existence in man of a death-surviving soul or consciousness. The normal consciousness, the mind, is known to be perishable, and therefore separate from its imperishable adjunct, the psychical consciousness, the soul. It is true we die to those around us when the bodily frame, which alone is the instrument of communion with them, ceases to be an instrument, by the absence of the mind which it obeyed. And it is believable that “though the body moulders into earth, that spirit which is of purer origin returns to its purer source.”

Indeed, from the dawn of history there has been an innate belief in the immortality of the soul, and this belief has at times been revealed in striking words. Cicero, for example, said: "Whatever that be which thinks, which understands, which wills, which acts, it is something celestial and divine, and upon that account, must necessarily be eternal."

Rousseau was equally emphatic when he said: "Not all the subtleties of metaphysics can make me doubt a moment of the immortality of the soul, and of a beneficent Providence. I feel it, I believe it, I desire it, I hope it, and will defend it to my last breath."

In fact, deep in the hearts of most people is a feeling of reverence for the Supreme Being, and it should be satisfactory to all true Christians that this reverence is often the most profound in the world's greatest thinkers and scientists. The immortal Newton, the greatest glory of the human race, was a notable Biblical student, and his theological writings included four letters containing arguments in proof of a Deity. And the illustrious Humphry Davy recorded his religious belief in the following words:

"I envy not quality of the mind or intellect in others; not genius, power, wit, or fancy; but if I could choose what would be most delightful, and I believe most useful to me, I should prefer a firm religious belief to every other blessing; for it makes life a discipline of goodness, creates new hopes, when all earthly hopes vanish; and throws over the decay, the destruction of existence, the most gorgeous of all lights; awakens life even in death, and from corruption and decay calls up beauty and divinity; makes an instrument of torture and of shame the ladder of ascent to paradise; and far above all combinations of earthly hopes, calls up the most delightful visions of plains

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

of amaranths, the garden of the blest, the security of everlasting joys, where the sensualist and the sceptic view only gloom, decay, annihilation, and despair”

Those who have studied the life and epoch making labours of Swedenborg cannot fail to place him among the greatest ornaments of mankind, and I have often wondered why it is that we do not hear more about his teachings that were so fundamental in many respects. The son of a bishop, he became great in science and philosophy, and still greater in theology. His investigations and labours covered a field of such an extraordinary extent that he could be safely regarded as a cosmologist, engineer, philosopher, poet, politician, seer, and theologian.

Indeed, I have more than once called attention to his claims to be regarded as the ideal of what correlation can do in giving a man mastery in the realms of philosophy. And it is safe to suggest that the world has never seen a theologian armed with such a profound knowledge of the mechanism of man's body and mind for dealing with questions relating to his soul, since Swedenborg's remarkable anatomical investigations, speculations and anticipations embraced the spinal cord, the ductless glands, the motion of brain, and the cerebral cortex as the seat of psychical activity.

His own view of what is necessary for a true philosophy of nature is stated by him in his “*Principia*” to be, experience, geometry and reason, and if we examine his numerous works we are amazed at the breadth of his experience, at his grasp of Nature's problems, and at the profundity of his reasonings. Therefore I cannot refrain from briefly quoting his beliefs as to the immortality of the soul.

“Whoever rightly considers the subject may be aware

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

that the body does not think, by reason that it is material, but the soul does think, by reason that it is spiritual. The soul of man, respecting the immortality of which so much has been written, is his spirit, for this is immortal as to everything that belongs to it, and this it is that thinks in the body.

“What is Life but the commencement, formation and preparation of the soul for a state in which it is to live for ever after the body dies? And what this formation and preparation, but the means by which the soul shall continually strive to form and bend the body to its likeness, and never suffer the latter to reverse the order, or to form and model the soul.”

It is true that there have always been sceptics and schismatics and also unbelievers in the existence of a God, people who have quite honestly become atheists, and that some of these, with increased knowledge have renounced their disbelief and become devout Christians. The illustrious Francis Bacon quaintly said of atheism

“I had rather believe all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran than that this universal frame is without a mind, and therefore, God never wrought miracles to convince atheism, because His ordinary works convince it. It is true that a little philosophy inclineth man’s mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men’s minds about to religion, for while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them and go no further, but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to providence and Deity, nay, even that school which is most accused of atheism doth most demonstrate religion, that is, the school of Leucippus, Democritus, and Epicurus. The causes

of atheism are divisions in religion, if there be many; for any one main division addeth zeal to both sides, but many divisions introduce atheism."

As to the destruction of the simple faith of religious-minded persons, which would rob them of everything that reason and religion can supply to make this life a blessing, well may A. J. C. be concerned; as, apart from the grievous loss of the consolations of religion, due to a disbelief in an after existence, there is a real danger of an increase in crime and a growth of evil in all countries in which atheism, or even agnosticism, prevails.

Indeed, in this connection, the views of Dr. Maurice de Fleury, as expressed in his notable work, "Medicine and the Mind," call for attention: "We must not leave out of consideration the evolution of the religious idea, which we have discarded as useless and unfounded, while the English, notwithstanding the multiplicity of their sects, have always been of one mind in endeavouring to root the religious sentiment in the mind of childhood. I believe in the efficacy of belief in a just God, and hope in a future life for the culture of simple minds. There is no system of morals more thorough or more profoundly human than the Catholic morality, and I find it difficult to conceive how any other ventures to attempt rivalry with one which has the justice of God for its basis and eternity for its sanction."

Many will agree, on the whole, with these views, and believe that if there were no God one would have to be invented.

Those of us who have come under the spell of great divines know how the faith and hope within us can be stirred by their sublime eloquence, and fervent prayers; but such ministers are as impotent to explain, as men of

science are, when it comes to details as to Paradise and the mighty hosts of the dead. The fact is, of course, a veil impenetrable hangs before these eternal mysteries—the riddle of the ages. It has been ordained that such enigmas shall remain unsolved: and we should heed Dr. Johnson's dictum—"The good and evil things of eternity are too ponderous for the mind, it sinks under them in passive helplessness, and it should be content with calm belief and humble adoration"

There are good reasons for believing that the triumphs and marvels of modern science in wireless telegraphy, and in telephony in particular, have stirred the imagination of many people and started them to think of spiritual things and effects inexplicable by the known laws of Nature. Further, some idea of what is meant by boundless space may have been grasped by them when reading about the recent theories advanced relating to the so-called split star Nova Pictoris; to the effect that it may possibly be 36,000 billion miles away—in fact, so far off that the light rays, by means of which it is seen, left the star on their way to this planet some 2,000 years before the Pyramids were built, light coming to us from the sun in eight minutes. Of course, such quantities are beyond imagination, and they make the human mind grow giddy; but they help to show the awe-inspiring vastness, the magnificence of the divine Creator's operations, and the infinity of the space which surrounds us.

In a reverential spirit my concluding thoughts may be expressed in Young's fine words:

*Still seems it strange that thou shouldst live for ever?
Is it less strange that thou shouldst live at all?
This is a miracle; and that no more.*

IMMORTALITY—OR NATURE IS MAD

BY

THE REV. J. P. ARENDZEN D.D., D.Ph., M.A.

THE answer to this question must be sought both from reason and from revelation. Human reason by itself, unaided by divine revelation, teaches us the survival of the human soul after death and the sanction for good and evil beyond the grave. The evidence for these truths is, in fact, so overwhelming that assent to them is universal in time and place. Those who deny survival and sanction beyond this life are abnormalities, few in number, and found almost exclusively in times of mental decadence consequent upon the strain of over-civilization. In healthy circumstances the human mind assumes its native vigour, and without a tremor of hesitation embraces the evidence of the life beyond. This evidence is found in the very nature of the human soul. Death is dissolution, or a falling asunder into parts. The soul is the highest unity we know on earth: it is an indivisible principle; it has no parts; hence it cannot die.

Moreover, nature does nothing in vain. It pursues an intelligible purpose in all it does. Now nature itself has laid the desire for immortality and the expectation of a sanction for good and evil in the human heart. This

desire and expectation postulate the real existence of the object desired and expected since they form the striving not of the individual merely, but of human nature as such, and the conation of nature cannot ultimately tend towards the non-existent. If the aim striven for did not exist, nature would be mad and this world a madhouse. But sane men postulate the sanity of the Universe, or rather of Him who made it. Denial or doubt of the sanity of creation and therefore of its Creator can only arise in a mind itself not sound.

Again, man by experience knows that nothing whatever in this material Universe can set at rest his inner life and thus bring his manhood to completion. Give a man food and drink in abundance, give him safe shelter and soft clothing, give him pleasant sights and dulcet sounds, give him whatever can gratify his animal nature, give him robust health and surround him with healthy offspring, man is ever restless in this world. Promise him a never ending existence on this globe in company with his fellow men and he shudders at the thought, for he instinctively knows that it would be unbearable boredom, to which suicide would be a relief. In consequence, man infers the existence of another world, different from this, where his nature will be at rest and come to its maturity. We are evidently beings in progress, but progress without a fixed terminus is a self-contradictory notion, an evolution without a state of completeness into which to evolve is a self-evident absurdity. As this terminus and state of completeness is not obtainable on earth, it must be obtainable hereafter.

Lastly All men—not criminal lunatics—know the categorical imperative within themselves: thou shalt do right and avoid wrong, Reason with irresistible necessity

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

concludes that in the end it will be well with those who do well and ill with those who do ill. Now, one month's experience of life on earth is sufficient to convince any adult that no such sanction for good and evil exists here. Many evildoers enjoy all the good things this world can offer till the very moment of death. Men therefore rightly conclude that there exists a state of life after this where the ethical law will be vindicated. On these and similar lines human reason has always come to a conviction of a life after death and has declared those who doubt or deny it irrational.

The assertion of anatomists or biologists that nothing in their respective sciences proves the existence or immortality of the soul leaves any thinking man unmoved. No logical thinker ever sought the proof for immortality in anatomy or biology. Physical sciences deal with occurrences observable by the five senses, but no reasonable man ever claimed that the soul was visible, audible, tangible or an object of taste or smell. Hence its continuance after death is beyond the province of physical science. To ask biology or anatomy for its verdict about the existence or survival of the soul is like asking it about the Sonnets of Shakespeare, the virtue of Socrates or the heroism of nurse Cavell. Besides the small world of material realities a greater world stares us in the face, a world in which we live and move and with which we are concerned during the greater part of our conscious life. Our dictionaries would shrink to a diminutive size were we to omit all words that refer to immaterial realities, such as right and wrong, honour and shame, virtue, vice, love and hatred, purity, unselfishness, truth, veracity, fidelity, sin, remorse and repentance. In this immaterial world our soul is at home because it is itself an immaterial agent.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

Whether this agent survives bodily death is to be decided by mentally considering immaterial facts, not by physical observation. It is idle to ask those whose study is strictly limited to the observation of the behaviour of matter what their researches tell them of the world of mind. One might as well ask a professor of Chinese philology for his verdict on botany.

In order to decide the question of the soul's survival, one needs a wider outlook on human life than that which is obtained from the study of cells and bones. We glory in the wholesome institution of trial by jury because we realize that in matters of fact, in the great affairs of man demanding a full appreciation of the realities of life, it is safer to trust a number of average citizens than a set of specialists. Somehow, a bench of biologists seems unsuitable in a verdict on a murderer. In matters of eternal import mankind happily goes its way guided by its wider outlook on life rather than by the utterances of scientists; for, because of their narrow specialization, they are not exempt from the danger of combining a very limited mentality with an exceedingly small field of experience. The conviction of survival and sanction after death is at once so spontaneous and universal, so deeply rooted in human rationality, it is the fruit of such complete analysis and synthesis of human life, that it can never be doubted to any great extent.

Beyond survival and sanction after death, unaided human reason can, however, hardly go with absolute certainty. Of what kind the life after death may be, how and where it is lived, whether it is everlasting for all, for the evil as well as the good, human reason alone could not decide beyond the possibility of doubt.

Where mere reason fails, revelation comes to man's aid

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

Church teaches that, previous to the Last Judgment at the return of Christ, there exists an intermediate state, commonly called Purgatory, or state of purification. This state is not a second chance of salvation, since the final state of the soul is always irrevocably settled at the moment of death. It is a delay of happiness for those whose eternal salvation is secured. Many people die not in unrepented, grievous sin, but with the stains of lesser sins on their soul, or with their debt unpaid to God's justice for sins, forgiven, indeed, but imperfectly repented of. Such people pass at death into a state which is at once one of great calm and resignation and one of intense sorrow. Their calm arises from their certainty of salvation and the surrender of their will to the will of God. Their sorrow arises from their temporal exclusion from the vision of God face to face, from the temporary frustration of their ultimate end, for which they crave with the full intensity of their untrammelled spiritual being. Hence Catholics are wont incessantly to pray for them, that the Eternal Light may shine upon them, that they may rest in the embrace of God.

THE ANSWER OF THE SPIRITUALISTS

BY

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

It has always been a matter of surprise to me that the mass of evidence as to the conditions of life beyond the grave collected by psychic means has not penetrated more generally to the public. This evidence seems to me to be worthy of the most serious attention. It is reasonable in itself—so much so that it presents the most logical religious philosophy which I have ever heard, and it comes in a more direct way than any previous Inspired message.

The reasons for the delay in its circulation and acceptance would seem to be that the more dramatic and contentious physical phenomena have obscured the message to which they are meant to call attention. Also that the scheme presented does not fit in with any preconceived idea taught by any of the churches, although in essentials it is not antagonistic.

I should not exaggerate if I say that there are thousands of messages bearing upon the point, very many of which have been collected in books and many circulated in manuscripts. Their validity is attested by the fact that they agree remarkably among themselves, that they are often

accompanied by information concerning this life which proves to be correct, and that psychic phenomena which come with them point to their supernormal origin. If the reader cares to consult such books as Lodge's "Raymond," Walbrook's "Case of Lester Coltman," Walker's "The Bridge," or Vale Owen's works, he will find much information as to our future fate.

Far from being annihilated, our lives carry on in a far more intense and vivid fashion than before. We undergo a change of vibration (there is no simpler way of expressing it), but we change in nothing else. Our form at its best, our character and our knowledge are exactly the same as before. We find ourselves in an exceedingly busy and complex life in which we have full scope for all the mental powers which we possess—which means that the environment must be much the same. It seems to me, apart from these revelations, that it is perfectly clear from logic and common sense that this must be so unless we are annihilated. The whole nature of the artist centres upon his art, of the musician upon his music, of the man of science upon his science. If this were cut out the man, even if he survived, would not be the same man. But if it is not cut out then it postulates a means of expression, and that in turn postulates a critical appreciative audience or public, so that along that line of thought we obtain clear confirmation of what we are told.

The whole appearance and method of life is, we are told, analogous to that which we have here, as a tune upon a higher is analogous to one upon a lower octave. All changes, however, would seem to be for the better. Physical pain is absent, though mental trouble, such as remorse, may continue. There is not such a mixing of jarring natures as on earth, but those who are in sympathy are

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

attracted together. Everything is, therefore, more peaceful and harmonious. Family ties only carry on in so far as they are sympathetic.

The surroundings and their colouring are described as reproducing what is familiar to our eyes and senses, but in more beautiful forms. There is no sudden transition—nor is there anywhere in natural evolution. Mental progress has to be worked for there as here. Spiritual progress is in a way easier, as one is in closer touch with higher entities, but in another sense it is more difficult, as it is the troubles of life which give us the chance to put a finer edge upon our own souls. "We pity the poor folk who have no troubles." Such was the message I once had from a spirit control.

In the descriptions which we have had of that third sphere, which is the spiritual home of the average decent human being, terms are used such as flowers, fields, lakes, streams and mountains which may stand for exactly what they say, or may be the nearest approach they can get in their attempt to get a parallel in earth life. Their happy homes, their great halls, their temples and their facilities for recreation have all been fully described. The picture of the places where the children grow to maturity is particularly beautiful.

Such a new and homely conception shocks the mind at first, but when one considers that it is only under such conditions that we could attain *human* happiness, and develop to the full the gifts that we possess, it is impossible to suggest any alternative which would be more reasonable. The spirit body may seem to us a tenuous thing, but as it is surrounded by a whole world of the same texture it and its environment seem as solid to them as ours to us.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

As to where this land is we have to bear in mind that it is expressed in sounds beyond our register and in colours beyond our spectrum, so that it might well coincide with our own earth surface and yet be unobserved by us. Their own conception is that the spheres are circular and round the world. At the same time there seem to be immense numbers of undeveloped spirits, many of them from among the rich and famous of this earth, who are held down either on the surface or near it for long periods because they have not yet developed sufficient spiritual strength to fit them for a higher environment. Roughly, this condition corresponds with the old idea of Purgatory—a cleansing period before the soul can rise to what is its true place.

There may be darker and grimmer places for those who have been positively wicked, and whose reformation can only be effected by punishment. But it is all to one end, the chastening and ultimate redemption of the soul. It is always temporary, but would seem to be severe while it lasts. We are taught that any narrowness of religious vision, or any limiting of God's mercy to this or that sect, is a dangerous mental condition which calls for correction.

On the whole, the prospect is infinitely cheering, and Providence will prove to have been far kinder and less exacting than any orthodox religion has imagined. Death is usually a great improvement in condition, but not a great break in development. Those who pass over frequently say how surprised they are to find how small is the change, but it is seldom indeed that any of them express a desire to return. Therefore, the message which Spiritualism has been able to bring to the human race as to their future fate is not only the most reasonable but also the most cheering which we have ever received. However grey the road, there is sunlight on the end of it.

It will be seen that there is a general resemblance to the old-time teaching, in that there is a Heaven—which is progressive, sphere above sphere—a purgatory and apparently a darker place of chastening. It differs only in giving reasonable detail, in showing that all races and all religions are on an equality so long as the individual develops reasonable spirituality and is not too set in his dogmas. There is much to show that this view of the future was appreciated in early Christian times. Christ's own allusion to the "many mansions" and to the wine which his disciples would partake with him in Paradise seems to point to a sphere where conditions would not break away abruptly from those with which we are familiar.

I repeat that this conception is founded upon an immense number of independent messages, varying occasionally in detail, but all united in their general effect. They should be taken seriously

RIVERS OF SOULS AND THE ETERNAL SEA

BY

GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM

(The Rev. Canon Hagnay.)

HUNDREDS of questions such as "Where are the Dead?" can be asked and have been asked. Sometimes they are asked in a spirit of hostility or captious contempt, with the intention of reducing a teacher to a condition of confused silence, or bringing his doctrine into derision.

In such a spirit the Sadducees told their story of the woman who had seven husbands and asked which of them could claim her as his wife "in the resurrection." Our records are brief; but it seems likely that these Sadducees, in their questioning, posed as plain men, "men in the street," and demanded a plain answer suitable to their understanding. Is it—one almost hears them insisting—John, Thomas, James, Geoffrey, Philip, Eustace or Sidney, the first, second, third, fourth, and so on, who has a right to the lady in the next world? They got no "plain" answer from our Lord, for no "plain" answer to such a conundrum was possible.

Or these questions may be asked as a form of mental gymnastics, for the sake of the delight of arguing, as mediæval Schoolmen are supposed to have asked, and

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

discussed, how many angels can dance on the point of a pin. Sincere men need not trouble themselves about questions asked in this way. Answers are not really desired, and no one would be more disappointed than the questioner if answers—plain answers to their plain questions—were forthcoming.

But sometimes questions like those of the Sadducees and the Schoolmen are asked sincerely, out of an honest and good heart. They are the expressions of difficulties which really trouble the questioners, and destroy the peace and joy which they might find in believing. Then the questions call for the best answers we can give them; or, if no answers can be given, at least the questioners deserve all the help that can be offered by those who rest content with what we may call the agnosticism of faith.

I take it that "A. J. C.," the asker of the question "Where are the dead?" is a man of this kind, not a hostile critic or a mere player with words, but an honest seeker for

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

For we know something about evaporation, the forming of clouds, the falling of rain, and so forth. We grasp the working of a law of which apparently the writer of Ecclesiastes knew nothing. Plain facts puzzled him, but they would not have puzzled him if he had known a little more. "A. J. C." is similarly puzzled. Must not space be overcrowded with the spirits of the dead since 30,000,000 of them pass into it every year?

Is it not possible that if we knew a little more than we do about what life and death are this puzzle would cease to be a puzzle? The Preacher, as he calls himself, would have been very foolish had he denied that rivers run into the sea merely because he did not understand why the sea got no fuller. Are we not as foolish if we decide that there is no life after death on no better grounds than our inability to understand why the universe is not congested with the souls of the departed?

There is a passion called love, which is one of the strongest things in our nature. It comes upon us and impels us to do very difficult things which otherwise we should not do—sacrifice ourselves, for instance, for the sake of the beloved ones. But where in us is love? Men of a simpler generation than ours placed love in the heart. There is a whole artistic convention and a use of language—"Sweetheart," "Heart of my heart"—to which we still cling, though we have long ceased to believe that love has any special connection with the organ which pumps blood through our bodies; just as we have long ceased to believe that somewhere up above the moon there is a city built of stones and pearls in which the souls of dead men congregate.

But we have not ceased to believe in the reality of love—we should be fools if we did—because the arrow-pierced

heart of the old valentine is no longer anything to us but a pretty symbol, and "sweetheart" no more than a convenient word.

We do not doubt the reality and might of this master passion because we cannot locate it anywhere in our bodies. It is a physical as well as a spiritual thing, just as life is ; but we do not allow ourselves to be teased into denying its existence, because it survives the changes which take place in our bodies and in our minds between adolescence and old age. Love does survive them. Is it not at least possible that life will survive the last and greatest change of all ? Why should we refuse to believe in the existence of the soul which we cannot locate, when we continue to believe in the power of love, though we cannot locate it either ?

"A. J. C." and his fellow-travellers—men whom I hope I know and surely think of as friends—will not rest satisfied even if they read what I have so far written for them. "It is no answer to one difficulty to suggest that there are others." That, of course, is true. But the consideration of even a few of the difficulties and puzzles which surround us does, I think, lead to the conclusion that a plain answer to a plain question is not always possible.

I am inclined to go further and to say that in the case of very great matters, love, life and immortality, a plain answer to a plain question is never possible. I can, anybody can, give a plain answer to a plain question about a very little matter. I could quite plainly tell "A. J. C.," for instance, that his train was due to leave Taunton at 10.45. But I cannot plainly answer "A. J. C.," nor can he plainly answer me, if either of us demand from the other why a mother loves her baby. The best we can do in the face of such an inquiry is to talk vaguely about "maternal

instinct," which is no answer at all. It is merely, like the words of a creed, a statement of fact in terms with a flavour of science about them.

I suppose that the best answer ever given to a question like "A J C's" is that of our Lord to the similar question of the Sadducees. Though they asked it in a very different spirit and deserved no answer at all. Yet that answer might well be accounted no answer. Perhaps "A J. C.," if some lingering feeling of reverence did not restrain him, might say of our Lord, as he says of His followers, that He shirked the issue. After all, if the seven men lived hereafter, and the woman lived, and they recognized each other, one or other of the men must be her husband. Which? No answer is given or attempted. But our Lord—not, we may suppose, for the sake of the questioners, but because there were others listening—says that in the life to come we shall be freed from the confinement of legal ties, which seem to us now not only right but inevitable.

"They neither marry nor are given in marriage." Did the Sadducees or any of those who heard Him—do we—understand what He meant? The best we can do is grasp at the flying glory of the conception of a life where love, which now sanctifies marriage ties, will transcend marriage and all ties, will be a perfect thing, altogether unconfined, and make us like God's angels or like God Himself.

Yet, after all, He did not say whose wife she was to be. The plain answer to that plain question was not given; because in that other, greater life, the question itself would have no meaning. It is not that an answer is refused, or the issue shirked, but that the question is meaningless. It is as if a man should insist on asking, "How much less love shall I have for my wife after my little finger is cut off, or my foot, or all my teeth pulled out?" and argue

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

that there must be so much less love in him since there is demonstrably so much less of him for the love to be in

I think that is the way with "A J C's" question and many others like it. Once we know what that life is, we shall see how little meaning these questions have, and how foolish we are now to let ourselves be troubled by them. In the meanwhile is there anything for us except what I have called the agnosticism of faith? "I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come," not because I understand what they are, but, partly at least, because I do not. And I am comforted by the thought that I understand none of the greatest things any more—love, for instance, or loyalty, or faith in my friend, or the impulse to self sacrifice, or life itself, this life. Why should I refuse to believe in that other life because I can ask fifty answerless questions about it when I could ask just as many questions and just as answerless about things in which I must believe?

THE ETERNAL VISION

BY

J. A. SPENDER

SEVENTEEN years ago, when I was in India, I spent a morning talking with a learned Brahmin about the religious beliefs of East and West.

We discussed the doctrine of reincarnation, and he described its various stages up to the point when the soul passes out of the earth-bound circle and becomes absorbed in the universal spirit. He spoke of this as the supreme bliss, but my Western intelligence halted and stumbled, and I said that this absorption of the soul must be its extinction, since no conscious existence could be attributed to anything which had lost its individual identity.

He replied that, on the contrary, consciousness would be multiplied as the individual became absorbed in the all-embracing consciousness of the universal mind, and described in glowing terms the ineffable state of beatitude which awaited the soul when, purged of all earthly dross, it became one with the infinite.

He said, finally, that inability to think this thought was the chief infirmity of the Western mind as compared with the Eastern.

If the Brahmin is right, the question, "Where are the

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

Dead?" would finally be meaningless. They might in the immediate future be passing through other incarnations, but in the end they would be nowhere and everywhere, or say, rather, in a region in which there are no "wheres," and existence is co-extensive, if it is right even to use that word, with infinity.

Whatever may be the truth of this idea, the Brahmin was wrong in saying that the Western mind cannot entertain it. It would be truer to say that all the mystics, Western as well as Eastern, have reached out to it in their emotional moments.

Dante, for all his mediæval theology, speaks with a solemn fervour of "the great sea of being" (*il gran mare dell' essere*), and his vision of Paradise is less that of a place than that of a state in which the individual will is wholly blended with the will of God. This, too, if we try to think it out, would, according to human standards of judgment, be as complete an absorption of individuality as the Hindu state of beatitude.

The image of great waters as the final destiny of the human soul seems to have a peculiar fascination for poets and writers of imagination. I went to see George Meredith—I think it was in the year 1898—when he was convalescing from an operation, the second in a few months. He spoke of himself as having been hurled over a cataract, and having been caught first on one ledge and then on another. "And now," he said, "I am waiting for the last plunge into the great deep pool of all-being." He said it with a kind of exultation, and it was clear that the final adventure had no terrors for him.

Another example may be found in that charming but puzzling little poem of Tennyson's, "Crossing the Bar," so familiar to us in its musical setting as a last tribute to

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

the departed. What exactly was in the poet's mind when he wrote this? He speaks of a tide "too full for sound or foam when that which drew from out the mighty deep turns again home"—which suggests the image of the little wavelet of individual existence passing back into the "great sea of being." But this thought is glanced at and passed, and with the final stanza a quite different image comes up

*For though from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.*

The earthly pilot meets you when you are coming in from the sea, takes you across the bar, and so into harbour. Tennyson's pilot is to meet him when he has crossed the bar and is putting out to sea, borne by the flood "from out our bourne of Time and Place." The thought seems to evade him. He is to be where there is no time and no place, yet the very idea of meeting the pilot implies both time and place, and some harbour somewhere to which the pilot will take him.

The poets take this liberty of combining a mysticism outside time and place with very definite theological ideas implying both. They cannot do otherwise, if they talk of a future state at all, for the idea of incorporeal existence outside time and space defies description, except in terms of human experience, which imply time and space. All theology is in this difficulty, and some theologians have clung to the doctrine of a literal resurrection of the body to get over it or evade it.

It was commonly taught in my childhood that the dead

were in a state of sleep until the resurrection, when they would arise with new bodies, and it was impressed upon me that the word cemetery meant a sleeping place. I have even heard it said in my youth that Christianity was in line with science, because it too denied the possibility of conscious existence without a body. This doctrine had, at all events, the merit of being logical in the material sense, but it had also the great disadvantage from a religious point of view of destroying faith in a future existence by making it depend on a condition so improbable.

But we have to face the fact that all these difficulties are involved in any answer whatever to the question "Where are the Dead?" To believe in a disembodied spirit is an act of faith which we may think to be justified—as I do—by the nature of human existence, but the kind of life which is led by the disembodied spirit is beyond our thoughts.

Some think they can deduce it from Scripture, others believe that they have revelations from spirits. The prevailing mediumistic idea, if I understand it, is that spirits have collectively the power of creating their own place surroundings out of mind-stuff. The word "collectively" is my own; but it is necessary, for otherwise every spirit would create different surroundings and other spirits, so far as they entered into those surroundings, would be merely incidents in its dream.

Spiritualism seems generally to evade the question of place by flying to the "fourth dimension"—a region which is said to "interpenetrate" the material universe—and sometimes it is boldly claimed that the existence of such a region has been mathematically proved. So far as I understand the matter, all that mathematicians claim is

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

to be able to construct a geometry on the hypothesis that space has four dimensions—which is a very different thing from proving that the fourth dimension exists, or that, if it did exist, it would be an appropriate medium for the spiritual existence.

So whichever road we take, we get back to our starting point—there is no “where” in the spiritual or discarnate existence. We must think of the *state* of being, not of the *place* of being. If, as the poet says, the soul passes “from out this bourne of time and place,” its condition must be literally ineffable, i.e., beyond conception by human language and thought, which are bound by time and place. To some this seems vague and unsatisfying, but to me the notion of having to locate a departed friend, or having myself to wander in an infinite universe is far more terrifying.

The notion that there would be no room in infinity for the humans who have lived and died on this earth is not one that troubles me at all. If my thoughts ran on those lines, I should fear that they would be lost in infinity.

The German biologist Haeckel said that if he were permitted to ask one question and obtain an answer from the powers that be, his question would be, “Is the universe friendly?” Christianity answers that God is love and that “all things work together for good to them that love God.” Those who believe in a friendly universe will scarcely find a better answer to the question, Where are the Dead? than in the splendid rhapsody which ends the Eighth Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, from which these words are taken.

I read that chapter in my own way—a way that might not please the orthodox—but I find in it the foundation of all that I believe about human immortality, and nothing

to me is more thrilling than to see the Apostle bursting out of his own unintelligible theology into the great simple vision of eternal union between the human and the divine.

But Paul, unlike the Brahmin, insists on his "I" and "Me," and what he has in mind is union, but not absorption.

* * * * *

I have endeavoured in what I have written to confine myself strictly to the question put to me, but since others have construed their instructions more liberally, I may perhaps be allowed a postscript. If the dead are not, as Sir Arthur Keith appears to believe, the question where they are falls to the ground, and there is no more to be said about it. If they *are*, it has necessarily to be answered in metaphorical language, for no human speech or thought can convey the idea of non-corporeal existence. The believer of necessity betakes himself to faith, and there is no argument he can use which may not be riddled by an earth-bound logic.

But, as Pascal says, the heart has its reasons which reason does not know, and what this debate, as it seems to me, has brought out is that the witness, if anywhere, must be sought within. I have in my life-time read scores of books of theology and scores more assailing them, and at the end of it all I know of no proof of the validity of any belief comparable to the simple fact that man is a religious animal.

We see him from the beginning of time building his altars and stretching out hands to the farther shore. There is no analogy or parallel to this in the animal world, which Sir Arthur Keith has so thoroughly explored, and no evident necessity for it in the case of man, unless it

corresponds to some reality. One cannot deduce it from the grey matter of the brain or the physical qualities of the intestines, it is there, making man unique, and accompanying it are thoughts, emotions and affections which charge the whole of human life.

What the reality may be is beyond the reach of our thoughts. The same baffling nature of things which has put this riddle inside us has decreed that we shall not solve it this side of the grave. It is probably, as Mr Arnold Bennett has suggested, wiser in that respect than we think, but in proportion as we believe it to be benevolent we shall trust it to do for us far better than we could do for ourselves. "*In la sua Voluntade e nostra pace*" —In His will is our peace.

"It is necessary," says the Greek philosopher, 'that even if man is mortal, he should live as far as possible as if he were immortal,' and that comes very near being the last word.

THE SOUL DEMANDS ETERNITY

BY

37872

THE REV. T. RHONDDA WILLIAMS

(Chairman Elect, Congregational Union.)

THE correspondent who raises this question for discussion in these columns chides the Christian minister for not going into details regarding the lot and the life of those who have passed over to the other side. He rightly calculates that their number is very vast, and he wonders where they are and how they fare.

It is evident that his difficulty is one of imagination: "Picture if you can the army of countless millions," etc. There is no doubt that many people feel this to be one of the stumbling-blocks to belief in immortality, for it must mean the immortality of overwhelming numbers of human beings in prehistoric ages, because, as William James said, "we are too democratic now to claim immortality merely for ourselves."

We have to think of the hosts of Hottentots and Australians that have been and shall be. Imagination faints at the effort to realize them all still living. William James admits that he had experienced this difficulty himself, and he treated of it in his lecture on "Human Immortality" because he had come to see that it harboured a

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

are never satisfied with what we know. The intellectual life of man is a potential infinitude.

The same is true on the moral side of his nature. He is stirred onward by an ideal which he never fully attains. When Jesus said: "Be ye therefore perfect," He was not imposing some obligation from without; He was voicing the meaning of the soul itself. The moral ideal looks ever towards a completeness which the moral life on earth never attains. "The city is built to music; therefore it is never built at all; and therefore it is built for ever." Let a man see this, let him realize the significance of it, and feel the power of it, and then he is not likely to believe Sir Arthur Keith or anyone else who tells him that death is the end of the story.

Does God, or the Universe, which gives him this intellectual zest mean nothing more for him than the gathering of a few shells on the seashore? Is man, just when he is beginning to know things, to drop into the eternal darkness and exist no more? Is the splendour of the moral ideal, which transcends all attainment, to die down into the night? Are the aspirations which reach out towards the eternal morning to end, so far as we are concerned, in the cruel gloom? Is all upward striving, faith and prayer to be silent in the cold forever?

If I admitted that, I should not try any more to think out what the meaning of this Universe is, for to me it would be an irrational world, and I should have no confidence therefore in my own rationality. It is no answer to this to say that we live in our influence in other lives, and that the human race is immortal. The greatest gain, the intellectual and moral, of the individual life can never be passed over to other lives in the form of influence.

If the individual is lost, it is a loss to the Universe, and

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

I cannot believe in the rationality of an Order that laboured so long to produce such an outcome, only to destroy it in a few years. As for the immortality of the race, we have got to remember that the theory which consigns the individual to the dust also consigns the race to the dust in time.

Moreover, an immortal race—if there could be such a thing—of mortal men is not an inspiring conception; it is little more than an endless repetition of disappointed lives and defrauded souls.* We demand something more of Him who made us than one short life in this world. Immortality is the ~~prop~~phesy of the nature of man. Something in him announces itself to be imperishable, something that demands a larger world and a longer day for bringing out all that is implied in it. The fact is our endowment is absurd if this life is all, and real religion brings us to an acute sense of that endowment. The moral pressure of our nature is too strong, and spiritual aspirations, once awakened, are too imperative, if in a few years we have to return to the dust. Someone called immortality “the prophecy of reason.” It is so.

Of course, when we speak of founding our faith in another life upon the meaning of human nature, we must remember that that meaning is to be found in the highest achievements of that nature. We must learn the meaning of our nature in its fullest and finest and best examples, even in Jesus, the highest, and then we shall feel something in us stronger than death—powers that shall not be dissolved when the heavens and the earth pass away.

To put these views to people in sorrow, is not to ask them to exercise a blind faith, but a faith founded on reason. Jesus Himself heightened and enriched the conviction of immortality, not by what He said directly

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

on the subject, but by intensifying the sense of the value of the human soul. From a study of the nature of individuality, Prof. Royce reached the conclusion that we must have another life, another life to find out who and what we are.

Our life, he would maintain, is a process of attainment, the attainment of individuality, to whose fullness we cannot come in this present existence; our rational faith is that we are destined for it in a life which we now see not, but which nevertheless shall be continuous with this human life. "Of this our true individual life, our present life is a glimpse, a fragment, a hint, and in its best moments a visible beginning." "We mean individuality and we seek it more and more, we shall win it in God, but not in this mortal scene."

It is a comfort in an age like this to be able to tell the simple religious man, who trusts his unlearned faith, and upon whom men with only a small smattering of knowledge often look with a smile of scorn, that his religious sense has really given him as a faith that the truly learned man reaches as a rational conclusion in philosophy.

It is no question of rewards and punishments; it is that we have discovered the growing value of personality, and demand eternity to work it out.

No one need be disturbed by Sir Arthur Keith's statement. Physical science is neutral on the question of the survival of the soul, and even on its existence. It can neither prove nor disprove. It can speak no final word on the relation between mind and brain.

If we argue that the function of the brain is to transmit thought, not to produce it, as Sir William James did, and as Sir Oliver Lodge does, what can physical science prove against us?

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

Sir Arthur Keith has no right to speak for all medical men, for many medical men believe in God, and the soul, and immortality.

Nor can he speak for all scientific men, who were more unanimous in that view fifty years ago than they are to-day. It would be easy to quote eminent authorities against him. The physical scientist when he speaks as philosopher or theologian is just as liable to be mistaken as anyone else, and it is a mistake to give to the philosophic or religious statement of a man of science any undue weight. He has no added authority in this realm because he has wide knowledge of physical research. Such research cannot even discover the soul. But that disproves nothing; it is only like saying that a foot-rule or a tape-measure cannot give us the dimensions of love. The fact that spirit cannot be discovered by a microscope is no evidence for the non-existence of spirit, but only for the inadequacy of the microscope for the purpose.

John Fiske, pointing to man as the crown of creation, says: "Has all this work been done for nothing? Is it all ephemeral, all a bubble that bursts, a vision that fades? Are we to regard the Creator's work as like that of a child, who builds houses of blocks just for the pleasure of knocking them down? For aught that science can tell us, it may be so, but I see no good reason for believing any such thing." He declares his belief in the immortality of the soul as a supreme act of faith in the reasonableness of God's work.

physical view of the spirit of man. But, like many others, I am sharply impressed by the fact that Christian ministers habitually shirk the issue of the scope and nature of life after death."

But, after all, can we Christians reasonably complain of this, seeing that our Lord—one imagines with intent—never enlarged upon this overwhelmingly interesting subject? He certainly mentioned "the many mansions in His Father's house," and also the sufferings of Dives in Hell, and to the penitent Thief: "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise," but Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead, appears to have been absolutely silent over his experiences in Hades—or wherever his spirit may have been. How, then, can the authorities in the Church dilate, or speak with confidence, upon a topic over which such a veil has been thrown?

As Henry Drummond writes in "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," "The problem is, with a material body, and a mental organization inseparably connected with it, to bridge over the grave." Emotion, volition, thought itself, are functions of the brain. When the brain is impaired they are impaired. When the brain is not they are not. Everything ceases with the dissolution of the material fabric; muscular activity and mental activity perish alike.

With the pronounced positive statements on this point from many departments of modern science we are all familiar. The fatal verdict is recorded by a hundred hands and with scarcely a shadow of qualification. Unprejudiced philosophy is compelled to reject the idea of an individual immortality, and of a personal continuance after death.

Thus Drummond says: "Physiology decides definitely

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

and categorically against individual immortality Science meets the entire conception of immortality with a direct negative ”

If there is no future life, and death is the extinction of our being to what are we to ascribe the age long and almost universal convictions and beliefs of even primitive and prehistoric man in a system of rewards and punishments after death ?

Study, for example, the wonderful preparations made by the Ancient Egyptians for the entry of the disembodied spirit into the Hall of Osiris and the weighing of his actions in the scales

Many other illustrations could be given, but one or two more will suffice

This from Virgil's "Æneid ”

*Then, since his sins unshriven the sinner wait
And to each soul that soul herself is Fate,
Few to Heaven's many mansions straight are sped
(Past without blame that judgment of the dead),
These all (disembodied spirits) on the ordered day,
God summoneth in great array*

But what a strain of sadness runs through some of the writings of the great classics Here are two quotations from the Odes of Horace

*Life's little span
Forbids long hope to man*

and

*Trust nothing to the morrow
Live to day*

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

The following lines might almost have been written by a Christian. And, again, from the "Georgics":

*To God again the enfranchised soul must tend,
He is her home, her author is her end;
No death is hers; when earthly eyes grow dim,
Starlike she soars and godlike melts in Him.*

What a remarkable resemblance to the description of the birth of our Lord—I am quoting again from Virgil:

*O great good news! 'ere all the woods that ran
O psalm and praise of shepherds and of Pan
The hills unshorn to heaven their voices fling;
Desert and wilderness rejoice and sing;
A God He is! A God we guessed Him then!
Peace on the earth He sends and joy to men*

As Drummond writes: "The whole confusion around the doctrine of Eternal Life has arisen from making it a question of philosophy. We shall do ill to refuse a hearing to any speculation of philosophy; the ethical relations here especially are intimate and real.

"But in the first instance Eternal Life, as a question of Life, is a problem for Biology. The soul is a living organism, and for any question as to the Soul's Life we must appeal to Life-science.

"And what does the Life-science teach? That if I am to inherit Eternal Life I must cultivate a correspondence with the Eternal."

In conclusion, how can spiritual and physical life be judged by the same standards? The scientist is compelled to admit, after all, that there are more things in

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

Heaven and Earth than can be known by his philosophy. He can dissect the frame of man, but he cannot explain life or thought. Here is the point at which the spiritual transcends all his efforts and baffles his most minute calculations. And here one last thought—'God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship in Spirit and in Truth,' and it is on this truth, which cannot be bridged over, that Religion and Science are at variance.

What a pathetic contrast is the passage from Cicero's treatise on old age, which it is suggested by Dean Alford should be read in comparison with the following verses from the Second Epistle to Timothy :

"O glorious day when I shall go to that Divine assembly and company of spirits, and when I shall depart out of this bustle, this sink of corruption, for I shall go not only to those great men of whom I have before spoken, but also to my dear Cato than whom there never was a better man or one more excellent in filial affection, whose funeral rites were performed by me, when the contrary was natural, viz., that mine should be performed by him. His soul not desiring me, but looking back on me, has departed into those regions where he saw that I myself must come, and I seem to bear firmly my affliction (viz. the loss of him), not because I did not grieve for it, but I comforted myself thinking that the separation and parting between us would not be for long duration."

Thus the great heathen, and now the note of triumph in the words of the great Apostle

"For I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing."

THE SECRETS OF LIFE AND LOVE

BY

ROBERT BLATCHFORD

THAT very human appeal of a man in the street for guidance as to the soul's survival of bodily death deserves the respect and sympathy of *Daily News* readers. No bishop, no man of science, can give positive and convincing answers to his questions; but perhaps I, as another man in the street, who has turned from materialism to spiritualism, may help to dissipate some of the controversial fogs which discourage and confuse him.

Those who hope for immortality may be divided roughly into two classes. There is the excellent old lady at the fruit shop of whom a French writer said: "Tell her that she will spend a million years of bliss in a delectable paradise, but that then she must cease to be, and she will shed bitter tears amongst her tomatoes;" and there is the grey-haired business man, twice mayor of his own town, who spoke to me of his wife with boyish *naïveté* and simple pathos as waiting for him in the better land.

I think I belong to his class, and I think that the majority of those who hope for a future life are really hoping for a reunion with "those who have drunk their cup a round or two before, and one by one crept silently to rest."

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

It is a glorious and sustaining hope. We who have drawn courage from it in our times of bitterest loss and most cruel trial must not abandon it and face despair without full and unquestionable proof. I hold that of all things human love is the most precious, and therefore in the struggle between love and death we must contest every inch of the ground.

How stand the proofs? Many years ago a famous man of science, questioned on the subject of survival, answered: "I do not know, but all the evidence is against it." That was my opinion—then. I told myself more than once: "All the evidence is against it." Imagine my surprise when, sitting down to test the evidence, on both sides, I found that there is no evidence against it.

I share the general respect for Sir Arthur Keith as a man of science, but his opinion on the subject of survival does not trouble me at all. It is a purely negative opinion. He does not and cannot disprove the existence and continuity of a soul: he only tells us that his experiments have not revealed a soul.

Ruskin once wrote: "Professor Huxley does not believe in God. He has never found one in a bottle." And we may say of Sir Arthur Keith that he does not believe in a soul; he has never found one in a corpse. Let us rest assured on this one point to begin with: The chemist and biologist have not proved there is no soul, they have only proved that so far they have not found it.

What is death? Is it, as many think, the end of life? Who can presume to say that until he can answer the question, What is life? No man of science, how gifted and eminent soever, knows the nature or the origin of life, and how should he know the end? Science, wonderful as it has become, can neither explain life nor create it.

Science cannot make a thing that will grow, that will think, or will, or reproduce its species. Science could make a synthetic seed, but it would be dead.

What is life? Modern science holds that the brain is the life; but it obviously is not. A man is reading in his study, a blood clot stops the beating of his heart. The man is dead. He can no longer speak, or see, or hear, or feel, or move. He cannot any longer love, or will, or reason, or desire. Where now are his imagination, his wit, his memory? No man of science can tell you. Sir Arthur Keith does not know. What has happened to the brain? The brain is still intact. All the cells are there, the cells in which are stored up memories and habits; but the brain has no life: it is impotent. The man is a corpse.

Yes, but he has lost nothing in weight or substance. All his bones, muscles and nerves remain; but they do not work. Why is the man a corpse? What has gone from the body? There is as yet no material loss. The brain is there; but the life is not, the personality is not. If the brain is the man how can the man cease to be while the brain continues to exist? The brain continues to exist: yes, but it does not continue to work. What made it work? Where is the principle that made it work? Nothing is gone from the body but life. What is life? If we do not know what life is, nor whence it came, nor whither it goes, how shall we dogmatize about its future?

The difference between an animal and a machine is vital. The machine is "worked" by some material power. But the animal has no engine. The wings of a hover-fly make thousands of revolutions a second: the only motive power is the mysterious, intangible, untraceable thing we call life. Consider the song of the blackbird, the flight of

II HERE ARE THE DEAD?

the swallow Whence come their speed their endurance their power? We do not know The human heart will go on beating through all manner of change and stress for a hundred years Once it stops it will never beat again Why? Because its motive power was life and life has ceased to act Sir Arthur Keith thinks there can be no soul, since he has never found one, but he will not deny the thing called life although he never has found and cannot explain it

The man in the street says Sir Arthur's opinion has caused consternation in the towns and villages There are more things in any town or village than are dreamed of in our human philosophy

Who has not seen with wonder the love light in a human eye? What lit that lamp? Where does the light go in the hour of death? My first male child had very beautiful eyes When he died I was watching by his cradle He seemed to wake out of his sleep and opened his glorious eyes to look at me, and in a few seconds the light faded in those eyes, faded as if one turned down a lamp, and went out But what was it that went from his bright eyes? The chemist and biologist have not laid bare the secrets of life and love, but the secrets exist

The man in the street asks for a lead I advise him to read Professor Hudson's book, "The Divine Pedigree of Man" This book disproves the claim that the brain is the man

He says "According to the best authorities the acheulithic period or primordial epoch which was the age of skull less animals, consumed considerably more than one half of all the years that have elapsed since the advent of organic life on this planet During this period the lower vertebrates appeared, but a brain was not evolved

until a later epoch." How, then, can we say that the brain is the seat of life or that the "brain is the man"?

The man in the street says the chemist and biologist laugh in their sleeves at the magic of the Spiritualists. I would respectfully suggest that the chemist and biologist would laugh less if they knew more. I am a sceptical person; but I cannot controvert the evidence which the Spiritualists advance in proof of human survival. Many eminent scientists and men of the world have accepted Spiritualism.

We cannot dismiss as ignorant, credulous, or unintelligent such men as Ruskin, Thackeray, Alfred Russel Wallace, Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, and Sir Edward Marshall-Hall. And when it comes to a question of evidence the Spiritualists stand out as the only witnesses who produce evidence of a positive kind.

Yes: it is true that there is no evidence against human survival of death and it is true that there is a great volume of evidence in its favour. I do not presume to dogmatize, but I do go so far as to say that in my opinion, based on personal experience, the spirits of the so-called dead survive and that they can and do communicate with friends on earth.

I think if the Man in the Street will investigate Spiritualism for himself he will overcome the disquietude due to a too easy faith in the chemist and biologist. Those gentlemen are very clever, but they do not know everything, and we must not take their guesses for facts.

THE LESSON OF LIFE

BY

T R GLOVER

(Public Orator, Cambridge University)

I HAVE not read what Sir Arthur Keith actually said in his lecture about Immortality, and I am not greatly interested to know what he thinks

It is not the first time that we have been told that science has pronounced against a future life, and I suppose that people have always been scared a little by the pronouncements of science and philosophy, though to day the latter, of course, takes a second place. Strictly speaking, neither science nor philosophy tells us anything, they are (it is well to remember) abstract nouns at best, without life, sex or mind, and if it seems handy to use either word as the subject of a sentence, the personification is no more than a bit of careless shorthand

Science says nothing, scientific men, as they are called (they resent the word "scientist"), say a good deal. But not everything that a "scientific man" says is scientific, they sometimes say things which do not "make for knowledge" nor come out of knowledge. Indeed, I am amazed to find how often a "scientific man" skilled perhaps in

investigation of some particular field of scientific inquiry, will sally out of his field into some other, where he obviously has less knowledge, and will lay down the law peremptorily on the basis at best of secondhand information, which is sometimes not very well founded on evidence.

In biology, for instance, I recall a well-known man plunging from careful study of variation as observed in blue Andalusian hens and chocolate mice and so forth to decide questions of psychology and to lay it down *ex cathedra* that moral qualities are governed by the same laws as feather-colouring, and at last (by a sudden swoop from his proper affairs) to settle a philosophic question of long standing by an abrupt but final verdict for some sort of determinism.

Perhaps some readers of this paper will remember a pamphlet written by Mr. W. E. Heitland, the historian of Rome, to recall Messrs. William Bateson and William Macdougall to a closer study of Roman history before they should use alleged facts from it to establish their views about race-suicide. It is curious that real thinkers should do in other men's fields what they would never do in their own, nor allow anybody else to do. But, I suppose, we all have some blind spot in England. Hear "business men" on art, or literary criticism, or Bible questions!

I take it that all Sir Arthur Keith can really say, or perhaps really did say, is that in his opinion there is not sufficient evidence for belief in a life after death. So much he is surely entitled to say. He does not *think* there is a life after death. I find sometimes that when I express an opinion (and I have been told that I do express opinions with perhaps at least enough emphasis) people say they think differently—say it with the air of suggesting that this settles the matter. It does not settle the matter, and

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

if I tell Sir Arthur Keith, or anybody else, that I lean to a belief in Immortality, the matter is not settled either—no, not one way, nor the other.

The question first to be settled is what right has he, or have I, to an opinion at all. I am quite sure (without reading him) that an outstanding student of science would admit so much.

Now to come nearer the point. I suppose we must all admit that Immortality so far is neither established nor disproved by evidence on which we can without question rely. I do not want the aid of Sir Oliver Lodge here; I have heard him lecture, and a very brilliant performance it was, in a Swiss hotel; it made me fancy Olympian Jove himself delivering a lecture in all the glory that Phidias gave him, and then picking up his ambrosial skirts for a flying leap over a chasm, the actual breadth and depth of which he did not seem to notice. It was not in the least what I learnt in the late eighties in this sceptical University to call scientific. Our training, you might almost say, was to believe nothing if we could help it.

I feel as much (I suppose) as any man the great difficulty of believing in Immortality. What I feel equally is the great difficulty of not believing in Immortality. I cannot picture or imagine an immortal life; but I have an idea that thinking and imagining are different processes.

I am led to believe in Immortality because I find it so hard to *think* the universe or human nature (perhaps that clause isn't quite grammar, but let me use my words in my own way) without Immortality. The thing won't *think* without it. (This grammar is worse; but you must see what I mean.)

Thus: I do not find what you may call loose ends in the universe. Yes, I know about the appendix and how

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

(as my scientific friend actually wrote, and he printed it) "When removed from the body a person feels no inconvenience."

But I don't feel sure that the last word has been said on the appendix yet; and what has been said points my way. Things that don't contribute go. Then, you say, is belief in Immortality going? I am quite sure it is not. During the war a man spoke with me one day of his daughter, killed in some hospital accident—"I would give all that I have to be sure I should see her again," he said.

That was just love; and I think that love is evidence—evidence that needs to be examined. Two things stand out; it is love that clamours for Immortality, for renewed intercourse with the beloved; and it is on love, with this unfathomed (unexamined?) instinct, that human life and human society rest. As William Cowper once wrote: "There is not room enough for friendship to unfold itself in full bloom in such a nook of life as this."

But all that may be a clever dodge of some creator to keep us breeding? A pretty devilish creator, then. But I cannot believe the Creator really is so devilish as I find my way into the spirit he shows in creation, his love of beauty. He, at all events, is an artist, and I cannot think of him but as practising the economy of art. Why should he want to develop natures so rich and various, so wonderful, as some I have known, if it is only to throw them into the wastepaper basket?

But, please note, they are not sketches on paper, inanimate things (it is hard to write that of any artist's sketches), but sentient living natures. Is the Creator so callous, so wasteful, so silly as that? The universe always recognizes facts, and the developed human character is a good deal of a fact.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

The problem of Jesus Christ disturbs me here. What did God (or your creator-devil—if you prefer) do with Christ? What an unthinkable universe if Christ is wiped out like a chalk design on a blackboard! You can think it, you say? Then I ask, have you ever thought out Christ? How much of Him have you captured? I have not gone very far in Christian thinking, but I see better than that. If the ultimate power (devil or inanimate) scraps Christ, I wish to blaspheme him or it. This is not evidence? No. But we are on the trail of evidence, I think, here; and till we have tracked it down and got all its value, I take leave to base myself on what, as distinguished from evidence, ancient lawyers called indications.

Another indication—not evidence, you may say. For my own life and thought, I find I lay more and more stress upon the authority of Christ. I go by the authority of the expert, where I cannot test the evidence myself. In this matter of Immortality as of some others (such as pain), I base much on the fact that he at all events did believe in Immortality, and that he based himself here on a more intimate insight into God than most of us have reached. The man of science handles small parts of nature, isolated phases, aspects and so on: the philosopher tries to get a whole view of nature, and I trust him more on great issues. Christ took a whole view of nature, and the universe, and the more I test it the more it squares with experience; and, like all tested results, it lets you extend experience, and is justified again.

One last word, before you decide what to think of another life, you must analyze what you mean by life—prolonged existence or developing correspondence with environment to the last verge of the real (an improper

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

expression, perhaps, again) If you just mean prolongation

*Oh, let him pass ' he hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer*

But if it is life in the full sense that Christ gave it, eternal fresh exploration of God, that is something different If what I have is not knowledge (and I admit so much), I still have grounds for faith, for trying an experiment, and I will say with Richard Baxter

*My knowledge of that life is small ,
The eye of Faith is dim ,
But 'tis enough that Christ knows all,
And I shall be with him*

WHEN IMAGINATION IS CERTAIN

BY

ROBERT LIND

“^{““}
Ir “A J C” had asked me this question when I was in the nursery I should have found it easier to answer than I find it to-day

I then believed, as most children did, that some of the dead were angels leading lives that I did not really envy somewhere above the blue of the sky and that the others were leading lives that I envied still less in a bottomless pit, probably somewhere under the crust of the earth

I am sure I did not think of Heaven as a place half so pleasant to live in as the north of Ireland, and, if I wished to go there, it was only because after death I should have to go somewhere, and Heaven was the sole alternative to Hell

It is impossible to tell how many people still preserve the old fashioned faith in a material Heaven, full of wings and crowns and harps of gold. Most Christians would certainly dismiss it as a mythical invention, like Santa Claus. Yet I am not sure that the child's vision of Heaven does not get nearer the truth about the destiny of human beings after death than the negations of Sir Arthur Keith.

The child, like Sir Arthur, speculates on something that

is outside the region of exact knowledge ; and the child is more nearly than Sir Arthur in agreement with the greatest teachers of mankind.

Whether we believe that the soul is immortal or not, we believe something that it is impossible to prove to anyone who cares to deny it. I certainly know no argument by which I could convince an intelligent man that the belief that the soul survives death is true. I did not myself arrive at the belief by any process of reasoning : if I still hold it, it is because I take it for granted and have never met an argument on the other side that undermined it.

The human mind is so constituted, however, that it has to try to find a reasonable basis for its beliefs, even though those beliefs are not based on reason. And so, while we know very well that what we believe is only a certainty (perhaps, only a guess) of the imagination, we do our best to defend it with arguments.

The chief argument for the immortality of the soul is, to my mind, the character of the men who have asserted it. The belief in immortality is not a superstition of savage tribesmen that gradually fades as the human mind develops and genius flourishes in its most abundant splendour. If it is a superstition, it is a superstition that has a stronger hold on the brain of a Plato than on that of a Bushman and dominates the imagination of a Dante far more powerfully than that of a Dyak head-hunter. It seems to be strongest, indeed, in those ages in which the imagination is strongest and to fade in ages in which the imagination fades.

Now it seems to me that the imagination is an instrument for the discovery of truth no less than the reason itself. It is probable, indeed, that without imagination it is impossible to discover any truth worth discovering. It is

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

the supreme creative force whether in science and philosophy or in the arts. It is by imagination that human society is held together, and without it man would have lived on the unchanging level of the beasts. Hence, when we find the most imaginative ages, through their most imaginative men of genius, affirming their belief in immortality, their affirmation seems to me to have the force of evidence. Obviously it is not evidence of a kind that a police-magistrate would allow in court. But it convinces the imagination itself as, say, "Hamlet" or St. Peter's convinces it.

As to what kind of immortality the soul enjoys, it must be admitted that men of imaginative genius have differed. Men of genius have always failed to picture even an ideal society of men and women on the earth we know, and their Utopias differ from each other only in their degrees of dullness. How, then, could they hope to picture the remoter world of the dead so as to enable us to see it in our minds as clearly as we can see the streets and houses of London? It may be said that if we accept the evidence of the imagination as regards the fact of immortality, we should also accept it as regards the nature of immortality. But the imagination, like the reason itself, has only limited capacities, and if it passes through the gates of the world of the dead it can bring us back none but a figurative account of it.

The Spiritualists, indeed, claim to have spoken with the spirits of dead men, and to have obtained from them detailed descriptions of life after death. I read one such description in which the dead man declared that he was living in a house rather like the house in which he had lived when on earth, and I think there was a band playing in the garden and afternoon tea.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

It is perfectly conceivable that such a life exists—that life after death is not so extraordinarily unlike life on earth as is generally supposed, and that there are the equivalents of tea-parties even in the lower circles of Paradise. It is also possible that the soul exists in time after time and in place after place on its travels between the world and eternity. I should not like to say that reincarnation or even the transmigration of souls is impossible. But we—at least I—do not quite believe such things. We are content to say that we know nothing about the matter, and we are even content to know nothing about it.

Why "A. J. C." is so anxious to know what kind of life he will lead when his soul has left his body I cannot understand. He could not conceive it if he were told any more than he could have conceived the life he is at present living on earth if it had been foretold to him as a child. The child knows that, with luck, he will grow old, but he has not the slightest notion of what it will be like to grow old. Probably he would shrink with horror from his fate if the map of the future were spread out before him in the nursery. There was a time at which I certainly should have wept if I had foreseen that I should grow up to be not a tram-conductor or a bandsman in my own country, but a journalist in Fleet Street. We make our tiny Paradises in childhood, and they are all situated in our own country and inhabited by our friends, and we are melancholy as exiles from Paradise at the thought of leaving them. But when we grow up and leave them we discover that the life for which we left them is more tolerable than we could have foreseen.

Probably, something comparable will happen to us when we die. If we survive, as I believe we shall, we shall, I

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

am sure, find life in the next world at least as interesting as we find life now—probably infinitely more so. If we assume the beneficence of God—and that, too, has been asserted by the imagination of mankind—it is easy to believe that there is no fate in store for the human soul which it cannot not only endure but enjoy. Beyond this, all is speculation and is bound to be nothing but speculation. We may accept the authority of this Church or that as regards certain aspects of life after death, but even the Churches do not profess to tell us very much. In regard to Hell, and the fate of sinners, for example, it has been said of the most dogmatic of the Churches that it is necessary for a Catholic to believe that there is a Hell, but it is not necessary to believe that anyone is in it.

A journalist I know once wrote an article in which he said that he understood that it was necessary for a Catholic to believe in Hell, but that it was not necessary to believe that anyone was in it except Judas Iscariot. On the day on which his article appeared he was walking along the street when he heard a shout, "You're wrong!" from the top of a stationary bus. He looked up and saw a Catholic priest, who called down to him: "It is not necessary to believe that Judas Iscariot is in Hell." Certainly, the old idea of a thickly-populated Hell that lasts for ever is something that one cannot conceive. It is easier to believe in total annihilation than in that.

Whether men nowadays really wish to live again as strongly as they used to wish it, it is difficult to be sure. It is becoming increasingly common to meet men who dislike the idea of immortality, even in Paradise. The wish is father to the thought in their denial of immortality just as, according to them, the wish is father to the thought

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

in the general assertion of immortality. Most of them, I fancy, dislike immortality because they cannot conceive it except as an infinite stretch of tedium. They think of it as an age beyond old age, and would welcome eternal sleep as an escape from it.

Even Mr. Shaw is apparently alarmed at the possibility of having to go on and on, writing billions of plays, throughout eternity. That this will be his fate seems very unlikely, but, even if it is, there is no reason why he should not enjoy writing a new play in Paradise as much as writing a new play on earth. Socrates, on being condemned to death, assured his judges that he looked on death as a gain, because it would either be an eternal sleep, undisturbed by dreams, or it would translate him into another world in which he could go on asking questions as he had done in this.

"Above all," he declared, "I shall then be able to continue my search into true or false knowledge; as in this world, so in the next; and I shall find out who is wise, and who pretends to be wise and is not. What would not a man give, O judges, to be able to examine the leader of the great Trojan expedition; or Odysseus or Sisyphus, or numberless others, men and women, too! What infinite delight there would be in conversing with them and asking them questions!"

An increasing proportion of human beings to-day would be appalled by the prospect of an existence such as Socrates half-playfully describes, and, indeed, it is reasonable to suppose that, whatever immortality is like, it is not like that. But it is difficult to see why anyone who is optimist enough to go on living on this earth should shrink with horror from the prospect of even such an immortality. And yet thousands of men do shrink from the prospect

of any form of immortality, as others shrink from the prospect of death

As I have said already, I do not know of a single conclusive argument by which I could convince them either that the soul is immortal or that it will enjoy its immortality. That dead men live again I happen to find credible. That dead men die for ever I happen to find incredible. But I could not even explain what immortality means. I do not know.

WHAT IS ETERNAL IF NOT THE SOUL ?

BY

THE REV. E. S. WATERHOUSE, D D , M A

MAN is the animal that asks questions, and the last question of all is : " If a man die, shall he live again ? " To say this cannot be answered is just as dogmatic as to say that any one answer is absolute and sole truth. Every science discusses questions incapable of any definite settlement. Some scientific men tell us the destiny of this planet is to be frozen by the cooling of the sun. Others suggest its elements will melt with the fervent heat of their own disintegration. Since we believe that the universe is capable of rational interpretation, we hold the most reasonable hypothesis as probable truth in such matters as these.

We are entitled to do exactly the same with the question before us. We may use our reason to discuss the destiny of man. We ask only for what is the common assumption of all knowledge, that reality is a system, not a chaos. Man is part of that system, as is the earth, and just as we take present indications as shadowing the ultimate destiny of this planet, so we may take present facts as shadowing the ultimate destiny of man. In both cases we can adopt the method of science, that of framing hypotheses based upon such facts as we can gather, testing them, and accepting that which best meets those facts, unless and until a better is found. We must recollect that even the idea of

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

evolution, which nowadays almost all thinking men accept as true, is but a well attested hypothesis. We live mentally by hypotheses. Immortality is a hypothesis, but that does not imply that it is not also a truth. My purpose is to give some reasons why it can be held to be such.

* * * * *

First of all, some objections must be met. There are many, but we sometimes forget that if we abandon belief in immortality we only exchange our difficulties for others, and, in my view, worse difficulties. I do not propose here to treat survival and immortality separately, though it may be argued that, just as the body after death takes time to dissolve into its constituent atoms, so the soul may linger, but not last, after partnership with the body is dissolved. I will deal first with the objection that it is hard to believe in the possibility that the soul may remain when the body decays. Some cry with Catullus

*Though suns may set and suns may rise,
When once for us the brief light dies,
Night's endless sleep must close our eyes*

None the less, survival is not an unnatural idea. Since all primitive peoples believe it expressly, it cannot be in any sense difficult to grasp. The difficulties are not natural difficulties—they are due to our own sophistication. As far back as we can trace, when "the slowly gathering twilight closes in utter night," man has held the belief and every race on the globe holds it to day. That does not prove its truth, but no one can lightly dismiss as delusion any universal belief of man.

It is curious that few who speak of the difficulty in believing in the survival of mind seem to doubt that matter (whatever that elusive entity actually be) would exist if

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

there were no minds. Yet since matter is known only as it is perceived by mind, to believe in the world we perceive continuing unperceived is to say we can *think* of something existing *unthought* of. The survival of matter without mind, not of mind without matter, is the unthinkable thing.

Others object that it is presumption for insignificant bipeds temporarily inhabiting a minute fraction of the universe to presume that they count for more than an incident lost in eternity like a bubble on the Atlantic. Yet what but the mind of man has disclosed to him his littleness? In doing so, it has also revealed his greatness. In one sense every discoverer is greater than his discovery. Even if the forces of the universe were let loose to destroy mankind utterly, man, about to perish, would be greater than the forces about to destroy him.

He would know what they were doing. They would not. If anything is to endure, the greatest wonder of the universe, which discovers all the rest, has the first right to endurance. If not, what can be eternal?

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Others object that if man survive, all living creatures must. I would rather say that every "monad," i.e., anything capable of having an experience of its own, may survive, for experience may be immortal at the lowest as at the highest levels. But all this means is that the conquest of physical death is far wider than we generally suppose. It is, therefore, a confirmation of, not an objection to, human survival, though possibly such survival may not guarantee survival of the individual, but may be only what has been called "joint stock immortality."

Some of the mystics have desired no other. They wish

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

to lose self in God To others this seems nothing different from annihilation, though if such immortality has no value for us it may have value for God, and from that point of view is better than annihilation Yet since personality may well be held to be the summit of the ascending curve of evolution, it is a reasonable faith that holds that the only true unity we know, that of the mind, shall survive the disintegration of that heap of atoms we call the body

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But what of the positive arguments for the belief? That afforded by moral law has appealed to some of the greatest masters of thought—Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Kant amongst them Its issues run beyond life, and its vindication is far from complete on earth No certainty is greater Euclid's space and Newton's time may disappear before Einstein's theory, but no Einstein could shake our conviction that we ought to do right

As Aristotle put it "A man as far as in him lies should seek immortality, and do all that is in his power to live in accordance with the highest part of his nature, as although that part is insignificant in size, yet in power and honour it is far superior to all the rest"

If the moral law's jurisdiction stops at the boundary line of the grave, it certainly presents the paradox of being at the same time the greatest, most absolute, and yet most imperfect law known to man

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Our personality offers a further suggestion It is built on a scale that this life cannot possibly exhaust Most of us are 90 per cent possibility and 10 per cent actuality "All I could never be" is a vast field It is difficult to believe that the latent and wholly undeveloped resources

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

that lie so abundantly in every man's mind, and are never tapped in this life, do not indicate that they are stored in us for development hereafter. It is not the Creator's way to equip His creatures with more than they can find a use for, and why this rule of Nature should be broken so signally in the case of man wholly lacks explanation, except on the hypothesis of a future use.

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Again, some say the *desiré* creates the belief in immortality, but what creates the desire? Animals often desire what they do not find, but do they ever desire what is not to be found? Man, sprung from the same stock, has no physical desire that may not be attained.

Why, then, in respect of spiritual desires alone, should he hunger for husks and pine for phantoms? If God so mock man I could stand up with such a God at judgment and condemn Him, or should I say "it"? But can mortal man be more righteous than his Maker? Or can a blind, purposeless "life-urge" build better than it knows, and surpass itself by creating purposive, conscious, moral beings? The hope of immortality rests even more on the nature of God than on the nature of man.

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Concerning the nature of existence after death it seems reasonable to presume that we continue as we leave off, not that immortality is indiscriminately bestowed alike on those who in their lifetime, as Dante puts it, "were never alive," and on those who in their patience have won their souls. It represents a further stage of development. If then this stage and the next are linked, it is reasonable to infer that the character of the training indicates the character of that for which we are trained.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

Since this life is a great struggle for values, can we possibly be trained by struggle for eternal inaction? Rather would it indicate that we shall pursue the same values, the true, the beautiful, the good "*sub specie aeternitatis*," in their eternal form, to use Spinoza's words. In their temporal form these values exist only in contrast to their opposites. But they are positive, and it may be that hereafter we shall seek to know what truth, beauty, goodness mean, in a sphere in which there is no error, ugliness, or evil.

I have given some of the reasons why it seems to me that this life's indications are best explained by the belief in immortality, confining myself to reasoning without appeal to mystic or Christian experience which confirms our reasoning. But the belief in immortality is more than a reasonable explanation of the facts of life. It is that which more than anything else has lifted man above the sphere of the senses and the tyranny of things temporal, which has opened to him a vista of infinity, and linked him with the eternities.

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Because he can rise to such a standpoint he is man, not merely the animal that asks questions, but that part of creation which is "likest God."

Because he can rise to such a standpoint, he may say with Valiant-for-Truth: "I am going to my Father's, and though with great difficulty I have got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the troubles I have been at to arrive where I am. My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me to be a witness for me that I have fought his battles who will now be my rewarder. . . . So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."



SWEDENBORG'S TEACHING

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BY

REV. CHARLES A. HALL, F.R.M.S.

NO discussion of the subject before us can be complete without reference to the definite and distinctive teaching of Swedenborg. I am astonished that contributors to the symposium have generally ignored it. But there is one notable exception. Professor H. J. Spooner, in his contribution, very properly paid a high tribute to the genius of Swedenborg and expressed wonder that the world does not hear more about his teachings, that, to use his own words, "Were so fundamental in many respects"

I could understand thoughtful people neglecting Swedenborg were he an ignorant enthusiast and an unbalanced occultist. But, in actual fact, he was a scientist and philosopher of the first rank. He was a watchful observer, a careful critic and a man accustomed to weigh evidence: he formed no hasty conclusions. Indeed, he was of such standing and disposition, and of such integrity of mind, that his utterances compel the respect of all who study them

Emanuel Swedenborg was born in Stockholm in 1688. He was the son of Jasper Swedberg, Bishop of Skara, and

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

at the age of twenty two graduated as Doctor of Philosophy at Upsala University After graduation, he travelled extensively in pursuit of knowledge, and, later, he was appointed Assessor Extraordinary of the Board of Mines by Charles XII of Sweden He was thoroughly at home in mathematics, physics, astronomy, mineralogy, chemistry, metallurgy, anatomy and physiology He has been described as "The Aristotle of the North" He was an inventor and anticipated several modern developments In his "Principia," he worked out a Nebular Hypothesis, sixty two years before La Place and twenty-one years before Kant advanced their theories This fact alone assures him of distinction in the scientific and philosophic realm

A student of Swedenborg's psychological development readily discerns that throughout his career he was eager for the discovery of Reality At a critical period in his life he essayed to discover the Infinite by empirical methods, but with others who have made similar attempts he failed But the quest was not vain, for it prepared him for discovery What he could not find scientifically came to him in a flash of inspiration, followed by years of remarkable experiences which confirmed his inner perceptions He realized that God makes Himself known by the impact of His Spirit on the responsive spirit of man, and that human immortality can only be spiritually discerned Arguments and evidences merely confirm conviction they cannot create it

From the year 1744 to the time of his death in 1772, Swedenborg was in constant realization of the Realm of Reality, or what he calls The Spiritual World In a remarkably consistent manner, he enjoyed the discernment of the Spiritual and the Eternal He saw what earnest

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

seekers all over the world are feeling after, and in his writings, notably that entitled "Heaven and Hell" (published by the Swedenborg Society, 20 Hart Street, London, W.C.1, and also obtainable in Dent's Everyman Series) his answer to the question, "Where are the Dead?" will be found.

Swedenborg affirms that man is a spiritual being and that his immortality is spent in a non-atomic but none the less substantial spiritual realm. He does not *have* a spirit: he *is* a spirit; and it is only in contemplating him as a spirit that we can find an answer to the riddle of human existence. Death is a vital process—a continuation of life—and by death man is raised into nearer consciousness of a spiritual environment in which he has really functioned from birth. By physical sensation we are in touch with a universe of material suns and planets, a world of mountains, plains, seas and animals and flowers; but the real realm of human activity is that of love, of thought, of poetry, romance and intelligence. These are real but not material; yet if we take them out of experience there is no life left. A man's life is his love, for his ruling love determines his thought and action, and through him modifies his environment. Human qualities do not respond to physical tests; you cannot weigh love in a balance or measure thought in a beaker, yet they are the most real things in our experience. Man is assessed by spiritual standards and in reality he knows more about the spiritual world in which his mind functions than he knows about the material universe with which he makes bodily contact. His judgment of the material world is that of a spiritual being: the mind which interprets is spiritual and the interpretation is affected by this fact.

Man, according to Swedenborg, is not so much brain,

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

brawn, bone, nerve and sinew His physical body serves a temporary use, and when that is passed he dies But death is not the end The body eventually returns "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," but the man himself survives and finds himself in the realm of reality, not disembodied, but in a spiritual body drawn from the non-atomic substance of the spiritual realm Modern theories of the constitution of matter render it easy to follow Swedenborg in his conclusions on this point, and they illustrate the fact that it is not essential that a spiritual universe or a spiritual body should be spatial, as is the case with the material universe and the bodily integuments of men living in touch with it To the soundly philosophic mind, the notion that man must perish at death or else the spiritual world would be over populated, presents no difficulty

But let Swedenborg speak for himself In "Heaven and Hell" he says "Man is man by virtue of his spirit, and not by virtue of his body, the spirit is not added to the corporeal form, but the corporeal form is added to the spirit, for the spirit is clothed with a body according to its own form Hence, therefore, the spirit of man acts upon every part of the body, even the most minute, so intimately and so universally, that if there be a part which is not acted upon by the spirit, or in which the spirit is not active, that part does not live" Again he says "Every one who weighs the subject aright must conclude that the body does not think, because it is material, but the soul, because it is spiritual The soul of man, on the immortality of which so much has been written, is his spirit, for this is altogether immortal It is the spirit which thinks in the body, because it is spiritual and that which is spiritual receives what is spiritual, and lives in a

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

spiritual manner; but to live in a spiritual manner is to think and will. All the rational life, therefore, which appears in the body belongs to the spirit, and nothing of it to the body: for the body is material, and materiality—proper to the body—is added, and almost as it were adjoined, to the spirit, in order that the spirit of man may live and perform uses in the natural world; because all things in this world are material, and in themselves void of life. Now since what is material does not live, but only what is spiritual, it is manifest that whatever lives in man is his spirit, and that the body only serves it as an instrument subserves a living, moving force. It is said, indeed, of an instrument that it acts, moves, or strikes, but to believe that these are acts of the instrument, and not of him who uses it, is a fallacy." Swedenborg continues: "Since everything which lives in the body and which acts and feels from a principle of life is of the spirit alone, and not of the body, it follows that the spirit is the real man; or, what is the same thing, that man viewed in himself is a spirit, and that his spirit is in a human form; for whatever is living and sensitive in man is of his spirit, and from the head to the sole of his foot all is living and sensitive. Hence, therefore, when the body is separated from the spirit, which is called *dying*, the man still remains and *lives*."

Thus, Swedenborg teaches that while in the flesh we are subject to spiritual laws and forces, and death makes no break in the continuity of their operation. Death does not destroy the human will or dislocate the activities of the intellect, for will and intellect are of the spirit. Our native inclinations and distinctions of character remain untouched by death, and hereafter, as here, our response to the stimulus of environment, and our behaviour generally,

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

depend upon the bias of our individuality "When man dies," says Swedenborg, "and thus passes out of the natural world into the spiritual, he takes with him all things which are proper to him as a man, except his terrestrial body, for when he enters the spiritual world, or the life after death, he is in a body as he was in the natural world, and to all appearance in the same body, since neither touch nor sight can detect any difference - but nevertheless his body is spiritual then, and is thus separated, or purified, from terrestrial things. When spiritual beings touch and see spiritual things, the effect is exactly the same to the sense as when natural beings touch and see natural things, and therefore when man first enters the spiritual world, he is not aware of his decease, and believes that he is still in the body which he had when he was in the world - he sees as before - he hears and speaks as before, and when he is touched, he feels as before. he also longs, desires, wishes, thinks, reflects, is affected, loves and wills, as before . . . Nevertheless, the difference between the life of a man in the spiritual world, and his life in the natural world, is great, as well with respect to the external senses and their affections, as with respect to the internal senses and their affections, for the senses of the inhabitants of heaven are far more exquisite than they were in the world "

The insistence of Swedenborg is that all human qualities, be they good or bad, survive death, simply because they are properties of the immortal spirit. Hence, love and hatred, kindness and ill-will, sympathy and callousness, honesty and dishonesty, greed and generosity, amiableness and disagreeableness, selfishness and altruism, rectitude and falseness, all are discoverable in the spiritual world, although a condition is reached when there must be a

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

separation of the good from the evil. Death does not convert a blackguard into an angel of light, and no pronouncement of a theological shibboleth under stress of sickness or death will alter, in any degree whatsoever, the fixed disposition of the deathless spirit. Death, as a process of life, accomplishes no more than our transition from consciousness of the natural to that of the spiritual realm. It reveals nothing but our deathlessness: it does not suddenly plunge us into the heart and solution of any mystery.

The continuity of life and character after death, and the fact that death makes no difference in disposition, as taught by Swedenborg, is remarkably illustrated in Sutton Vane's play *Outward Bound*. I understand that Mr. Vane had no specific knowledge of the doctrines of Swedenborg when he wrote his play, but he certainly produced a wonderful portrayal of the continued operation of the spiritual law which determines the development of human nature here and hereafter.

In the space at my disposal it is impossible for me to do full justice to the outstanding contribution made by Swedenborg to the subject under discussion. Suffice it to say that in clear, calm, rational and convincing terms he describes the process of death, which is really resurrection, as seen from "the other side." He shows that Heaven and Hell are, in the first instance, states of mind and character, and, in the second instance, environmental conditions projected from those states. He tells us that Heaven is a condition arising from love to the Lord and charity towards the neighbour, and that Hell is produced from the naked and unabashed love of self and the world. Each individual makes his personal expression of heavenly or hellish qualities, and individuals are grouped according

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

to their affections. This grouping is not arbitrary, but spontaneous. Heaven is a dynamic development—not a matter of reward, and folk are not cast into a material hell by a vindictive deity—they simply gravitate towards conditions which they prefer.

Swedenborg also declares that immediately after death we are in an Intermediate State. There our ruling love becomes evident and everything of mind and action comes into harmony with it. If the disposition be dominantly heavenly, we gravitate to heavenly associations: if it be infernal, we go to the conditions of our choice. Judgment is not arbitrary or legal: it is simply the final determination of character—which, in its turn, determines our final state in the economy of the spiritual world.

Swedenborg's answer to the question, "Where are the Dead?" is thus clear and unequivocal. Strictly speaking, he would say there are no dead. The friends we no longer see with the eye of sense are not buried in cold clay: they are spiritual beings living a human life in human conditions in a non-spatial but substantial spiritual world. On earth we are vitally related to that realm and are affected by it. Concerning it, we cannot say, Lo, here! or Lo, there! It is not a matter of space, distance or time: it is the region of affection and thought. It is the non-spatial which affects space, and the timeless which is the soul of time: in it we live, move and have our being. Nearness or distance, under spiritual conditions, are not a question of a measuring line, but a matter of similarity or dissimilarity of state. The departed are near us if their affections harmonize with ours: they are distant if their presence is mutually uncongenial. Says our author: "Change of place in the spiritual world is effected by change of the interiors, *i. e.*, the inner affections, so that it

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

is nothing but change of state. . . . Change of place being only change of state, it is evident that approximations are similitudes of the states of the interiors, and that removals are dissimilitudes. . . . Spaces in heaven are merely external states corresponding to internal. . . . Any one in the spiritual world appears to be present if another intensely desires his presence, for from that desire he sees him in thought, and puts himself in his state."

To such as accept Swedenborg's teaching concerning the after-life, death has no terrors. It is no more than birth into conditions which are the full fruition of our present potentialities. It is :

As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle.